THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

MEMOIRS

OF

MRS. MARY COOPER,

OF LONDON,

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE, JUNE 22, 1812,

IN THE TWENTY-SIXTH YEAR OF HER AGE;

EXTRACTED FROM HER

DIARY AND EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE.

BY ADAM CLARKE, LL. D.

NEW-YORK,

PUBLISHED BY B. WAUGH AND T. MASON,
For the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the Conference Office, 14 Crosby-street.

J. Collord, Printer.

1832.

BR1725
.C68A3
1832

14-jp-45

ADVERTISEMENT.

The editor of these papers had the pleasure of a short acquaintance with the late Mrs. Cooper, eldest daughter of John Hanson, Esq., a worthy and respectable magistrate of the county of Middlesex; and, in conjunction with her friends, he deplores the premature death of a woman, of whom he feels no hesitation to say, that her understanding was sound, her mind carefully cultivated, her charity unbounded, her faith unfeigned, her piety deep and rational; and her religious life without blemish. This is certainly saying a *great deal;* but not more than the subject most completely warrants.

The mind of Mrs. Cooper was of no common mould; and this, her Diary, and Letters, from which the following extracts are made, sufficiently prove. The Diary she had kept carefully concealed, even from her most intimate friends; and certainly never wrote it to meet the eye of man. As her heart dictated, and as occurrences presented themselves, so she wrote. To speak incorrectly she could not: to wait to *revise* and *polish*, she had neither

time nor inclination, as she wrote exclusively for her own instruction; and the improvement of her heart was the grand object at which she aimed. When this was attained, the *manner* in which it was accomplished was of no importance; as the whole, from beginning to end, was designed to be a *secret correspondence with herself.* Let this be the apology of the work, where the *matter* may appear *diffuse* and *inartificial;* and the *language negligent.* To have suppressed the following extracts on such accounts, would have been a real injury to all who shall have the opportunity of reading them: as it may be safely presumed, that no unprejudiced person can peruse this little volume, without having his heart religiously affected, and his mind considerably improved.

The advantages which this excellent young woman derived from a *religious education*, were many and important. Her pious parents taught her to fear God from her youth. The great and momentous truths of the religion of Christ, they carefully inculcated on her mind and heart, from her earliest years: they showed her, not only in their *precepts*, but also in their *life* and *conversation*, how she should walk and please God. They were workers together with him,

and he blessed the work of their hands. In all the branches of their very respectable and orderly family, they have proved the unfailing truth of that Divine saying, *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* They have dedicated their children to their Maker, and God has most graciously accepted the offering.

Were a proper line of conduct pursued in the education of children, how few *profligate* sons and daughters, and how few *broken-hearted* parents should we find. The neglect of early *religious education*, connected with a *wholesome* and *affectionate restraint*, is the ruin of millions. Many parents, to excuse their indolence, and most criminal neglect, say, "We cannot give our children grace." What do they *mean* by this? That GOD, not *themselves*, is the author of the irregularities and viciousness of their children. They may shudder at this imputation; but when they reflect that they have not given them right precepts—have not brought them under firm and affectionate restraint—have not showed them, by their own spirit, temper, and conduct, how they should be regulated in theirs—when either the worship of God has not been established in their houses, or they

have permitted their children, on the most trifling pretences, to absent themselves from it—when all these things are considered, they will find, that, speaking after the manner of men, it would have been a very extraordinary miracle indeed, if the children had been found preferring a path in which they did not see their parents conscientiously tread.

Let those parents who continue to excuse themselves by saying, *We cannot give grace to our children*, lay their hand on their conscience, and say, whether they ever knew an instance where God withheld *his* grace, while they were in humble subserviency to him, performing their *duty?* The real state of the case is this: parents cannot do God's work; and God will not do *theirs:* but if they use the means, and *train up a child in the way he should go*, God will never withhold his blessing.

Next to the *grace of God*, Mrs. C. carefully owned, that all her first and permanent religious impressions were owing to the pious affectionate care of her parents, and to that judicious and affectionate course of *discipline*, under which she was early brought up. At first, she thought her parents *too strict*, while absolutely prohibiting the fashionable, though deeply vitiating

amusements of the world. These prohibitions led her to look at home for enjoyments; she began to examine her own mind, to pant after useful knowledge, to seek God as her portion; and in these she found a source of pleasure, producing millions of gratifications, of which the gay, the giddy, and the garish, never dream, and can never enjoy. She then most gratefully blessed God for her religious and well conducted education, which was the means of preparing her heart to receive the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace, when she came to hear it preached in that way in which her soul delighted. Those who were best acquainted with her, knew that on this account, her gratitude was not only great to God, but also to her parents; to whom she ever felt a continually growing and affectionate attachment.

Before this very important subject is dismissed, the editor begs leave to present the candid reader with another remark: It is not parental *fondness*, nor parental *authority*, taken *separately*, that can produce this beneficial effect. A father may be as *fond* of his offspring as *Eli*, and his children be sons of Belial: he may be as *authoritative* as the *Grand Turk*, and his children despise, and plot rebellion against him.

But let parental *authority* be tempered with *fatherly affection;* and let the rein of discipline be steadily held by this powerful but affectionate hand; and there shall the pleasure of God prosper; there will he give his blessing, even life for evermore. Many fine families have been *spoiled*, and many *ruined*, by the *separate* exercise of these two principles. Parental *affection*, when *alone*, infallibly degenerates into *foolish fondness;* and parental *authority* frequently degenerates into *brutal tyranny*, when standing by *itself.* The first sort of parents will be *loved*, without being respected: the second sort will be *dreaded*, without either *respect* or *esteem.* In the first case, obedience is not *exacted*, and is therefore felt to be unnecessary; as offences of great magnitude pass without punishment or reprehension: in the second case, rigid exactness renders obedience almost impossible, and the smallest delinquency is often punished with the extreme of torture; which hardening the mind, renders duty a matter of perfect indifference.

In editing the papers of Mrs. C., very few liberties have been taken, except in the mere article of *abridgment.* Here and there, a few errors have been corrected, and some expres-

sions altered. Much of her MS. has been left unpublished, either because it was of a private nature, concerning herself and family alone; or because it was not judged to be such as would tend to *general* edification. The editor has never mingled his own observations with his text: what he found necessary to say, in order to introduce distinct parts, he has done by connecting sentences; which, in every place, are easily distinguishable from the words of that excellent person who is now with God. May the spirit in which she lived and died rest abundantly on every reader! A. CLARKE.

Jan. 1, 1814.

The following character of Mrs. C., as a *wife*, was drawn up by him who was best qualified to do it. Writing to a friend, Mr. Cooper says,—

"Her Diary will best develope her character, respecting which I ought to state, that no one ever knew she kept one. I myself had not the least idea of it, until it was discovered after her decease; although for the few happy months of our union, we were of one heart and soul, and were almost daily conversing together in the most unreserved manner of our experience in the things of God.

"What she appears, in that precious record

she has left behind, that she was in real life—a Christian indeed. She was not content with the ordinary attainments of Christians; she might be truly said *to adorn* the doctrine of God, her Saviour, in all things. The influence of the religion of Jesus was seen and felt by all around, in her holy walk and conversation, and by the manifestation of every Christian temper.

"I believe I may say with perfect truth, that I never saw any thing in her, from the time of our marriage till the day of her death, that was inconsistent with that holiness after which she continually aspired, and which she enjoyed in an eminent degree. During that period she never once gave the least pain to my mind; nor do I recollect having observed, in a single instance, any temper or disposition unbecoming a Christian.

"During the principal part of her married life she suffered much bodily indisposition, on which account she was in a great measure prevented entering into those schemes of usefulness for which she was particularly formed, and which her benevolent heart cordially approved; but, in her family, it was her daily study to prove a blessing to all about her; and she was much concerned that our servants might have reason to bless God for bringing them under our roof; and she had the happiness of

seeing that her prayers and endeavours for that purpose were not in vain.

"My dear little girl found in her a mother; indeed, had she been her own child, she could not possibly have given stronger proofs of maternal tenderness, affection, and care. Previous to our marriage she carefully read Mrs. Hannah More's writings on education, as well as some other authors on the same subject, that she might be the better qualified to discharge what she considered a most important duty, viz. (to use her own words) '*To cultivate and rear this immortal plant for the paradise of God.*'*

"She was of opinion that religion ought to be interwoven with the instructions of children, as soon as their tender minds are capable of receiving it: accordingly, she began with our little Margaret as soon as we were married; she was then two years old; and so assiduous was she in her instructions, that in a short time her infant pupil could repeat the Lord's prayer, and three or four of Dr. Watts's hymns for children.

"The same grace which prompted her to a life of active piety and usefulness when in good health, enabled her to bear suffering, when called

* See Diary, 15th June, 1811.

to it, with exemplary patience and resignation. I never once heard an expression of murmuring or impatience escape from her lips. In her I had a living example of the efficacy of Divine grace, and the blessedness of true religion. She possessed a remarkable simplicity of mind, which led her to embrace truth wheresoever she found it, though delivered in the plainest and most homely form. She was also a possessor of much genuine Christian humility; not indeed of that which consists in mere expression, but of that which led her to prefer others before herself; and notwithstanding she possessed more than ordinary intellectual attainments, as well as more than common piety, she carefully avoided a display of either, and never suffered others with whom she might be in company to feel any inferiority.

"In her Diary she says, 'Mental accomplishments avail little indeed, unless they regulate the heart, and cause the benefit to be more *felt* than *seen*; I must not *display*, but *act*; love, and be beloved.' On these maxims she uniformly acted.

"It would be easy to say more; but I am persuaded it is not necessary.

"J. C."

MEMOIRS OF MRS. COOPER.

Of the early life of the late Mrs. Cooper a near relative gives the following account:—

"Miss Mary Hanson, eldest daughter of John Hanson, Esq., was born in London, Sept. 16, 1786. She was favoured with a religious education, and was not suffered to enter into those foolish amusements which are so injurious to multitudes of young persons.

"At twelve years of age she left school, and completed her education under private tuition. This, with the encouragement held out to her application and improvement by an intelligent and affectionate brother, proved the means of exciting, in her ardent mind, that thirst for knowledge which ever after proved a source of constant delight. Her early years were passed in comparative solitude, her parents rightly judging that the example of youth, in general, afforded but few instances worthy of imitation. But at the time, she thought this a very unnecessary strictness, and envied those whose less cautious parents suffered them to form acquaintances without inquiry or concern.

"At this period, and previously to her leaving school, she often felt deep convictions of her own sinfulness, and the absolute necessity of

personal religion. I have known her frequently at school assemble several of the girls together in a large closet, and there speak to them, and pray with so much earnestness, that they have been all melted to tears. These impressions, however, were but as the 'morning cloud, and early dew,' and were succeeded by a very different disposition of mind. In the summer of 1802, she for the first time left her parents' house, on a visit to Portsmouth and the isle of Wight; where the natural gayety of her mind, which had been hitherto under restraint, meeting with objects congenial to its taste, appeared in all its ardour. Card parties and gay visits were now her delight; and I have often heard her say that she *endeavoured* to disbelieve the Bible and the existence of a God. The reflections of her retired moments were now so intolerable to her, that to drown them she read, with her accustomed avidity, volume after volume of novels and romances. Fascinated with the world and its manners, she returned home with a mind little disposed to enter into those serious and self-denying views of religion, which the Spirit of God had wrought in the minds of three in her own family during her absence: she, however, attended with them at the Lock chapel, where the judicious and intelligent preaching of the Rev. Mr. Fry, first arrested her attention, and then excited in her mind an earnest concern for the salvation of her soul. She soon became a member of the Lock, by receiving the sacrament administered according to the form of the

Church of England, which she always preferred: she also united herself with a society called a *conversation meeting*, under the superintendence of her minister, for the purpose of spiritual advantage and instruction; and exerted herself, to the utmost of her power, to instruct a large class of girls in the Sunday school of that society. But her removal to Hammersmith, in the spring of 1803, put a period to this work of love in which she so much delighted; and it was not until the year 1806 that an opportunity again occurred, of resuming her successful endeavours to impart knowledge and light to the benighted minds of the ignorant poor: this she did, not only on the Sabbath, but constantly twice in the week; for she devoted her evening hours to instruct them in writing, arithmetic, &c."

In the year 1806, Miss Hanson began to note down her religious experience, rather by way of meditation and reflection than diary: for it does not appear that she began to keep a *regular* diary till 1809. From the age of s venteen she had renounced the world, being fully persuaded that none of its pleasures or pursuits could impart happiness to her immortal spirit. For a considerable time she was a plant that flourished in the shade, and her real worth was little known; but had God in his providence called her to a more public situation in life, such were her natural abilities, and so

highly had she cultivated them, that she would have ranked high among those excellent and intelligent women who are an honour to our country. An extract from *the meditations*, mentioned above, will more justly portray her character than any thing that could be said by any other person. The first entry of this kind is dated in her twentieth year.

July 20, 1806.—Happiness is the universal object of pursuit; but how various are the ways which men propose to themselves for its attainment! When the desired object is possessed, alas! it also has inscribed upon it "vanity and vexation of spirit." The hope still remains that the next attempt will prove more successful; but alas! it is not in the power of finite creatures to impart it. God, in his wisdom, has made us dependent on himself for happiness; he has given us a free will, to choose this world for our portion; or himself, from whom flow pleasures for evermore. Sin has so bewildered, so darkened the faculties of our souls, that every thing beyond what is finite is enveloped in a mist. Revelation, the best gift of God to man, unfolds the glories of an invisible world. The solitude I have so long enjoyed, and yet, alas! so little improved, has often led me to retire into my own mind, and converse with my heart. I have discovered a jewel, little prized because little known. This treasure, bestowed on all God's creatures, when improved, may

become a source of consolation and felicity that will make them superior to the contempt of men and the agitations of disquietude. I feel convinced that to improve my intellectual powers is to have in store a constant spring of delights: it may prevent me from running into those snares which are held out as baits to the vacant, listless mind. But let me not forget that inward monitor, that soul bestowed upon me; that it is immortal, and will return to God who gave it, and that it is made capable of happiness or misery beyond this visible state. The thread of life, so very slender, so soon broken, is in the hand of God. O! thou Searcher of hearts, cold and senseless as I am to spiritual things, let not a consideration, at once so awful and impressive, pass over my mind without its due weight.

Aug. 10, 1806.—The cultivation of patience and meekness, both personally and relatively, is of the utmost *social* importance. If *meekness* in the sight of God is of great price, how must the possession and exercise of that spirit promote the peace of the possessor, and diffuse the charms of kindness around. In a moral point of view, the government of the passions, when heathenish darkness prevailed, was esteemed the highest pitch of moral perfection; and worthy the endeavour of every man. Socrates proved how the exercise of his reason could subdue dispositions of the worst kind; mental energy could repress passions, which, if unsubdued, would, like a torrent, bear down every thing

before them. If a man, destitute of the meridian light of revelation, ignorant of the purity of the Deity, surrounded by superstition, and pagan brutality, could thus triumph over himself, how should a Christian blush, who indulges every rising disposition, and suffers passions to be unchecked, which disturb the harmony of social intercourse, and exclude the sweet breath of peace!

I desire to live and act as in the sight of God; of him who gave an example of what his followers should be. Professors of religion, while they study to preserve outward decency and circumspection of deportment, too often stop there. This is a stumbling block to many. Is this all Christianity has effected? Was it for this only the great sacrifice was made? Blush, Christian! and be not called by that holy name while you indulge dispositions and propensities which are in direct opposition to the lovely spirit of the Gospel. It breathes love and benevolence. The old nature of passion, revenge, malice, and envy, is to pass away, and the new nature of meekness, gentleness, and easiness to be entreated, to take its place.—It requires both holiness of heart and life. Hence the serenity of the Christian is secured: and he is made capable of tasting that peace which passeth all understanding.

Dec. 21, 1806.—The happy retirement with which Providence has so long blessed me, affords me many opportunities for reflection, and the exercise of those powers with which man

was endowed,—the remains of his high original; for, in the image of God was man created. An immortal being should be a reflecting being, whose chief end is to glorify God. I should then deem it a privilege, that the means afforded to me are so favourable to my improvement in virtue and the knowledge of my Creator. My knowledge of the world has been sufficient to convince me, there is nothing in it capable of satisfying a soul formed for eternity. Happiness eludes our grasp like the moonlight shadow: if sought in the amusements of life, an hour's reflection discovers to us the dismal vacuum. Satiety often succeeds enjoyment. Amidst this general gloom, this chaos of disquietude, how delightfully does Christianity break in. It tells us not to love the world, nor the things of the world: our own experience proves the substance of all it contains; vanity, vexation of spirit. Are we left helpless in this state? O no! consolation to the afflicted—repose to the weary—safety in danger—comfort in death, are all offered freely; and are all sealed to those who will accept of them by the blood of the Son of God. Christianity smooths the rugged path of life: it fills the soul with a divine composure: creates at times a heavenly calm and foretaste of the blessedness in reversion. When alone, to reflect that God is with you, his Spirit engaged to assist and sanctify you, and Christ to justify and save you—O Divine consolation! let me fear nothing so much as a departure from God, as a carelessness about my soul; a

thoughtlessness about eternity. In departing from thee I depart from happiness. To fear thee is rectitude, to know thee is wisdom, and to love thee felicity.

Nov. 1, 1807.—When in secret retirement I reflect on the many illustrious saints who have sojourned here on earth, who have had to contend with inward and outward trials and vexations: when farther I view them in the chamber of death, hear the last groan that can ever escape them; and trace their flight to those realms of blessedness, where no sigh can ever enter to interrupt the harmony of the skies, or the internal repose of its inhabitants—whence is this lukewarmness of soul, this indifference which so successfully takes possession of my spirit? Why am I not animated by the review of those who have fought and triumphed, and have attained those mansions of everlasting rest?

Now, that outward circumstances so much conspire to render a life of religion easy; blessed with every external help; how is it that the world claims so large a portion of that heart which I would fain give up entirely to my Maker? O my God! what reason have I to dread lest future days should find me enslaved in sin; greedy of the pleasures this life affords. O let not that heart which has tasted the delights of communion with thee, those lips which have spoken thy praise, ever prove so treacherous to the beneficent Author of my being!

When I view *time* and *eternity* as to their

effect upon the soul, I am convinced how low sunk in sin must my spirit be, which thus practically mismeasures them. In a little time ruin will drive his ploughshare o'er this creation; the thunder of heaven will burst with tenfold violence; the lightnings will make the impending gloom tremendously visible; the elements shall become the instruments in the hand of the Deity, to proclaim to man that the hour of retribution is come! By terrors shall they now learn, that time is to be now swallowed up in the ocean of eternity.

Fast Day, Feb. 17, 1808.—As indisposition deprives me of the use of public ordinances, I will attempt to supply the want of them by a more particular examination of my own heart.

On this day, wisely appropriated for a season of national self-recollection and repentance, I would not have myself added to the number of those, who defeat the purpose of the institution by a coldness and indifference, or total neglect of its due observance.

As in the sight of God, I would search out those secret sins, which have so much separated me from those Divine consolations and gracious influences which I believe I once experienced; and here I blush at the recollection, that to my *closet* I at once trace the cause of all those heart-wanderings, that spiritual indifference, which alas! has too often grieved the Holy Spirit who has striven with me.

"I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast."

Prayer, by which only that mysterious communication between the Creator and his creatures can be maintained: prayer, which has sometimes introduced a very heaven into the soul; the most exalted and blissful employment of finite creatures; that which angels behold with delight, and devils tremble to view: alas! alas! how often has a stupid indifference been substituted for this. I have entered my closet, have shut the door, and strangely forgotten that the eyes of the Lord were upon a stupid senseless creature. Little did the humble posture of my body accord with a rebellious stubborn heart, alive to every thing but its eternal interests!

Prayer, formally, carelessly performed;—O my God! I confess with shame and confusion of face, that from this I trace pride, self-sufficiency, worldly-mindedness, and an indifference to those ordinances which once filled my soul with calm delight.

Sometimes, indeed, when I have asked my own heart on entering upon my devotions, "What is it you need? God knows and beholds you." Then have I been enabled to pour out my soul in confessing my sins, and have found lively impressions of the presence of God; and have arisen determined to be more diligent in obtaining an acquaintance with my own heart. But a few days have shown me the treachery of my intentions, and the impossibility, without the assistance of God's Spirit, of maintaining any thing like the life and power of religion within

me. The grace of God, like a spark in the ocean, can only be kept alive by a miracle.

O thou gracious Being! do thou pardon these my misdoings, do thou purify my soul from its many corruptions, and let thy blessed Spirit strive once more within me. O renew my soul! place eternity, with all its blissful enjoyments before me, that I may choose thee for my portion and happiness.

The vain and unsatisfying enjoyments of this world, which have had so much influence on me, O let them fade from my remembrance; let me view them in their true colours, and feel them in their deceitful tendency. Lord, thou didst create me for immortality. When the breath of life entered this corruptible body, I became a sojourner in a land which yields not fruits of such a nature as are sufficient to satisfy a soul journeying to another country; O may I live before thee for ever!

Sunday, Feb. 21, 1808.—Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, that maketh the Lord his portion; who, with eyes filled with tears of gratitude, can say, "The Lord is my shepherd." Blessings, beyond mortal calculation, are included in this personal appropriation.

Thus to regard that God, of whose approach thunders and lightnings were the symbols, when about to dispense his laws to his creatures; to call him by that endearing epithet—what a mysterious privilege! My soul, do thou diligently seek to be included in the number of that blessed flock. He who said, "Let there be

light," and there was light; who, by an act of his will, created man: and, but for infinite love, might have destroyed him when he broke the only command imposed on him; he who taketh up the isles as a very little thing, who counteth the nations as a drop of a bucket—even this God proposes himself for thy portion, O my soul!

Lost in the contemplation of thy attributes, teach me, O Lord, to comprehend how it is, so intimate a relation as a father and child can subsist between thee, who art infinitely great, and a rebellious lost child of Adam! It is enough; that holy word, inscribed by the pen of mercy, exhibits it to my understanding. I would wonder and adore.

Why did I not behold the light in regions where stocks and stones are the objects of adoration? Why do I not owe my origin to parents who have substituted Mohammed for Christ? To distinguishing mercy alone, we owe the privilege of reading that blessed word, which a few centuries ago was denied to all but a domineering priesthood. O my God, how imperfect is the attempt to acknowledge the gratitude I would feel in having parents who fear thee; who have taught me thy word, and brought me up with a reverence for thy ordinances: my heart, so prone to be rebellious, so alive to vanity, so negligent of self inquiry, what would it have been, or rather, what would it not have been, had they introduced me to the follies, and the dissipation to which thousands,

less distinguished than myself, have become a ready prey: a prey to that enemy who ever watches the unwatchful; who lurks to destroy; who strows the paths of youth with snares and baits, that he may carry them captive.

If, after the enumeration of such privileges, I should be found a mere speculative believer, a practical Atheist, how great the condemnation.

If religion be true, it ought to be the grand object of my life, the supreme concern of my heart.

April 8, 1808.—When the world, with its siren smiles, tempts us to drink deep of its enjoyments; when it would allure us into the paths of security, and whisper peace to the soul; youth, unsuspecting youth, fondly believes it true. In the spring of life, how many sweet-scented flowers meet us in our path; while regaling our senses with their beauty, we forget that *winter* will seclude them from our view—that darkness succeeds to light, and that calms precede storms. When disappointment lowers, and the cloud of affliction seems just ready to burst; then it is the world is stript of its mask, and its true character rushes on the view. Life is a chequered scene. As soon as our frail bark is committed to the mighty deep, the waves and billows of disquietude roll over our heads. If religion be the pilot, we are safe in the storm. I desire to lay the foundation of my happiness upon that rock, against which the afflictive uncertainties of this life must dash in vain: on this foundation the peace of my soul shall rest secure.

The firm persuasion I have of a particular Providence, of the Divine superintendence in every affair of my life, will console me under every disappointment. When I view mankind, their disappointments, miseries, disease, and wretchedness, and see that each individual has a cup of sorrow to drink; I feel surprised that this world should ever appear alluring to my eyes; that it should ever lay siege to my heart with so much success; that the things relative to another world should be so dimly viewed, so little prized. Religion, if it be sincere, must be the prevailing disposition of the mind; it must supersede every thing else; it must be a progressive work, and the soul must be preparing for a state of perfect holiness.

For about four years after the family went to reside wholly at Hammersmith, Miss Hanson devoted a considerable part of her leisure time to the improvement of her mind; and in this she found a source of pleasure, which she valued far more than these empty pursuits, which engage the attention of too many of her own age; and it appears from the following memorandum that she pursued some method in her studies:—

May 2, 1808.—The practice of early rising will, I hope, afford me ample opportunity of pursuing the following course and arrangement of reading:—

Begin every morning with reading a chapter in the Old Testament, and one in the New.

My devotional exercises to succeed.

Monday—History, with Maps. Gibbon's Rome to succeed Ferguson's Republic.

Tuesday—Natural history in turn, comprising botany, chemistry, and astronomy.

Wednesday—History.

Thursday—The English poets, make extracts from each; and one chapter of Locke on the Understanding.

Friday—Natural history.

Saturday—History.

Sunday—The Scriptures, and other devotional books.

In October, 1808, the gentleman, whose ministry she then attended, died. This circumstance seems to have affected her mind deeply; and, in consequence, she was led to make the following serious reflections:—

Oct. 6, 1808.—The remains of our beloved pastor, the Rev. W. Humphries, I have this day seen consigned to the silent tomb. His grave has been bedewed with the tears of his sorrowing flock; who have committed to the cold ground a man who possessed every grace that could endear a minister to his people. Such a life, and such a death! O may they be engraven on the tablet of my remembrance! Angels have conveyed him to the bosom of his Redeemer: and there he rests from pain, toil, and

sorrow. Death has introduced him to that inheritance, that mansion of bliss prepared for him. While we, encompassed by dull mortality, mourn on earth, he has reached his port, the haven of celestial rest. The glories of the eternal world are gradually unfolding on his astonished sight; and now, could he once more address us, how forcibly would he urge the importance of pressing forward in the heavenly road, and of laying hold on eternal life!

May I ever remember what a shining light he was, how the rays of his benignity were shed around on all who knew him. The image of the Redeemer was stamped on his life and conversation. Like him may I be devoted to God, and find in devotion a resource and refreshment to which my weary soul may betake itself, and find the dawnings of heaven. The soul, that immortal principle, which will survive the conflagration of the universe, was formed to live for ever: and that dissatisfaction, attendant on the possession of every earthly good, that vacuum which nothing sublunary can fill: that proneness to look forward in search of something yet unpossessed: how does all this prove its immortal destination? A heavenly spark which first emanated from the Deity. O may I more diligently converse with my own heart: and feel more practically the immense importance of living to the God who made me.

Sun., *Oct.* 16, 1808.—The services of this day have been so peculiarly solemn and affecting, that I desire to make a memorial of the

impressions made on my mind. At once sensible of the immense importance of Christianity, and the levity and thoughtlessness of my heart, I wish to improve by reflection those seasons when my mind has been impressed, and my affections raised to those spiritual objects, which I earnestly trust will be the portion of my soul for ever. Our dear minister has left us: at the summons of his God, his soul took its flight to the regions of eternal bliss; but his example, his life, and holy conversation, which the voice of friendship has so faithfully detailed, still lives in my remembrance: lovely in life, O how lovely in death! When I gazed on his remains, which still bore the impress of that serenity with which he met the summons of death: how ardently did I pant for a share in that salvation which, in such a season, could encircle the brow with composure, the spirit with delight. Let me view his life: the young were the peculiar objects of his solicitude: for them he laboured, and by ten thousand nameless instances won upon their affections, and made them admire the piety so influential in himself. He sought the Lord early, and his progress was never impeded by the indulgence of worldly habits. He continued steadfast in his course, and by his life and conversation evinced how practical Christianity shines; how superior to a mere speculative reception of its truths—to a flaming zeal about certain doctrines, which, while they engage the head, freeze the heart, and limit that spirit of benevolence which diffuses the charms of kindness to all

around. His sun has set at noon. He was ripe for the heavenly inheritance: his gentle spirit, disencumbered of mortality, is now in possession of that happiness purchased by the Son of God, "who wept that man might smile, who bled that man might never die."

Why is it that my soul is so content with earthly fare? why does it lay schemes of bliss below the skies? why are my affections so engrossed by material things, while that spark of fire Divine, which ought to flame with love to God, is unimproved? alas, how oft is this unnoticed.

Nov. 15, 1808.—To a social mind, pleasures derive an increase of enjoyment from communication; and sorrows which oppress the heart, how greatly are they alleviated by the kindness of a sympathizing friend; by the balm of affection poured into the wounded heart. But there is a melancholy which tinges every rising pleasure with discontent, which repels consolation; its existence in the mind is nurtured with mournful delight, and unsatisfied with this world, it disdains its offered comforts.

Thus I feel and acknowledge the mercy, mingled with judgment, that appoints to each probationer for heaven a cup of sorrow; were it not for this, the soul would grovel here below, it would become captivated with earthly possessions, nor glance a thought on the appointed *end* for which it exists. The gold would never be separated from the dross; were it, instead of passing through the furnace, to be exposed only to the sunshine, there it might lie

for ever unaltered. Prosperity is a severe trial to the Christian; when the path is strowed with roses, and nature, attired in loveliness, invites us to gaze and be satisfied with a paradise here below, how readily does the heart obey its dictates; how disposed to lose itself in the possession of present happiness; and to forget that winter, with an unsparing hand, will dismantle nature of its beauties; that the clouds will gather blackness, and the big tempest burst upon our heads. It is then in despondency we look around, and ask for the "sea that knows no storms;" for the port in which the mariners will find an exemption from the waves and billows of disquietude. O my God, let me seek thee in health, and thou wilt be near me in sickness; be thou the supreme object of my regard in prosperity, and then I shall not have to look around in vain for comfort, when chill adversity lifts its correcting hand; in seasons like the present, when my spirit, pervaded with gloom, finds no comfort but in aspirations after thee. O from heaven, thy dwelling place, lend a listening ear, make me to pant after thee! May I never feel a stupid indifference and lukewarmness in the pursuit of an eternal exemption from pain and sorrow.

Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought—Time, what is it? a moment, a vapour, a shadow; all, all comparison fails. Eternity is a boundless ocean, in which the emancipated spirit shall enjoy the smile, or sustain the frowns and vengeance, of the Deity for ever.

The six following months she appears to have devoted, in a peculiar manner, to the cultivation of her mind, in various branches of useful knowledge; the study of history still being paramount to all others: and yet not pursued so as to exclude more serious subjects; for with this she frequently connected a deep consideration of her eternal interests; as the following extracts from her journal sufficiently prove:—

Nov. 18, 1808.—I find considerable pleasure in *Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire;* it is a great monument of human genius and human fallibility. His invidious allusions to Christianity, I was prepared to meet; when entering *on* it, I begged of God to guard my mind from error, and not to suffer me to imbibe its skeptical spirit. My mind is perhaps in a degree fortified, by a previous examination of the evidences on which our religion rests. Where I have thought Gibbon's representations of ecclesiastical facts have been obscured by the darkness of his mind and intentions, I have referred to the same period in Milner's Church History, and am not left to draw my conclusions of Christianity from his representation of its progress and adherents; if I were, my inferences would be very unfavourable.

In the pure and invigorating atmosphere of the Roman republic, in which one delights to

trace the progress of civilization, freedom, conquest, and philosophy; the human intellect was cultivated to a high pitch of perfection; but this state was succeeded by a gradual prostration of the minds of men. In reflecting on the cause of this, I was reminded of the case of a man, who, beginning with but little property, gradually amassed a large fortune, for the attainment of which great assiduity and exertion were necessary; he omitted nothing likely to improve and accelerate the objects of his pursuit; riches are increased, large estates purchased, he sits down at his ease, and thinks of nothing but enjoyment; luxuries steal upon him, and he becomes more and more enervated; you look in vain for the industrious, persevering, self-denying man; no trace is left; and his successors become enchained to their estates: their faculties, not being exercised, grow torpid; their talents are swallowed up in sensuality; they are slaves to their passions, and they become slaves in their country.

Dec. 25, 1808.—The cultivation of my understanding has long been my aim and desire, and the time usually devoted by those of my own age and sex to pleasure and frivolity, has been spent in more rational pursuits. The restraints of education were, in the first instance, *imposed* upon me: this yoke I impatiently bore; but when, by the mercy of God, I was made *sensible* of the vanity of worldly pursuits, and their dangerous tendency; and, above all, was convinced that I had an immortal soul within

me, that an omnipresent Deity was the witness of my actions, the searcher of my heart and intentions; I was, I trust, made desirous of choosing God for my portion. Man must have recreations, resources, pleasures; the improvement of the mind, of the reasoning faculties, appears the noblest and most rational of indulgences. Knowledge has been so captivating to my imagination, that I have with eagerness snatched every spare moment for its attainment. While endeavouring to scan the great arcana of nature; to trace the finger of the Deity in every production; to mark his obvious *designs* in every creature of his hand; with what a double relish have I viewed the works of the great Creator; how has my heart glowed with joy in exploring these fields of novelty and information; nothing so much tends to exalt our ideas of God; nothing is so calculated to produce humility: nature is open for our perusal, and, by its beauties, alluring to the observer. How powerfully does the immensity of the great Creator strike the soul, when contemplating the starry hosts, when wrapt in astonishment, the spirit rises to the stars, and views them as the creation of its Father's hand. O! endearing title; though he dwells in the highest heavens, he has also his residence in the humble and contrite heart; which is as much the object of his care as if it alone existed.

When dissolving nature shall proclaim that the hour of retribution is at hand; when the rocks and mountains shall prove a vain defence

against the piercing eye of the avenging Deity; O that I may hail the moment as the time of my complete happiness, when soul and body, once more united, shall rise to eternal happiness. Why do I ever linger in pursuit of such a prize? It is my desire to have a greater acquaintance with God and his works, and more humbling views of myself. I wish to strive against every appearance of *vanity*, *conceit*, and *self-sufficiency*. Knowledge, without wisdom, puffeth up: I would, in this respect, *watch* my heart.

History I much delight in; and the perusal of *Rollin*, *Ferguson*, and *Gibbon*, has not only entertained, but much instructed me. To be made acquainted with the transactions of ages long since passed away; of empires which once existed in all earthly splendour, now known only in the scanty page of history; to trace the actions of great and virtuous men, though involved in pagan darkness; their love of virtue, so far as they knew it; their patriotism, which led them to sacrifice all for their country; how entertaining and instructive! The History of Greece, in a lively, forcible manner, portrays the effects of freedom and philosophy. Pericles, Aristides, Socrates, Epaminondas, all successively rivet the attention and excite admiration.

The career of these great men was generally closed by the effects of the blackest ingratitude from their countrymen; their sun, which rose in splendour, and ascended to its meridian with-

out a cloud to shade its glories, set in blackness and darkness; their services forgotten in the torrent of envy and malignity which obscured their last days. Painful are the instances of the vicissitudes of fortune; dreadful the effects of the unrestrained passions of men: but how obvious, to a reflecting mind, is the superintendence of Providence over the creation. Great men, raised up for peculiar ends; kings, who had grossly abused their diadem, and made their supreme power the instrument of intolerance and oppression to their subjects, are made to lick the dust; and, hurled from their splendour, feel the bitter pangs of remorse. Nations who have filled up the measure of their iniquities, become successively the prey of barbarians: all work together for some great political universal good; all proclaim His care, who at once views causes and effects, and sees from beginning to end.

Christianity certainly lost much of its primitive simplicity when Constantine made it an appendage to the state. His patronage introduced numbers into the Church who made religion a worldly gain. Pampered in courts, its adherents lost sight of our Saviour's declaration, "My kingdom is not of this world." The Church became rapidly corrupt. The fifth and sixth centuries present a most awful picture of the abuse and degeneracy of Christianity; a slight difference of opinion was sufficient to arm the opponents with swords, and every weapon that could in any wise injure their

adversary. The worship of images, the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, seemed to proclaim the reign of antichrist: and Mohammed the impostor was certainly destined to scourge those Christian nations who had provoked God by their idolatrous antichristian acts.

I could not read the dissemination of his principles, and the rapidity of his conquests, without viewing the just judgments of God on those nations, who seemed sensual enough to admit just such opinions, and such a religion, as Mohammed was about to enforce upon them, by the power of the sword. O God, thy judgments are just and righteous altogether!

Jan. 1, 1809.—

'We take no note of time but from its loss.'

I have just closed another year of my mortal account; it is an epoch which demands reflection, as, ere the close of the present one, the angel of death may swear that *time* with me shall be no longer. As the veil which now separates me from eternity may be drawn aside, and the realities of a future state burst on my astonished soul; it becomes me, therefore, as a being on whom God has bestowed an immortal spirit, to make ready, and to live in daily expectation of an event, which, from its uncertainty, is of the utmost importance; and, from its consequences, of tremendous moment.—Strange the infatuation that there can be triflers on the brink of such a precipice! The beasts of the field, the birds of the air, all fulfil the

appointed end of their existence; shall I, endued with a rational soul, an immortal principle, live to myself, confine my hopes, views, and expectations, to this transitory state, this commencement of being, where thorns and briers annoy my path; and where I may to-morrow be bereft of every comfort? Forbid it, O God! make me more diligent, more earnest in my desires after thee; more watchful over my own heart; and more willing to prepare myself, by a holy life, for the enjoyment of thy presence for ever. Let not my earnestness in the pursuit of knowledge be a snare to me, either by occupying too much of my thoughts, to the exclusion of devotion, or by making me proud and ostentatious: rather let it be an increasing cause of humility, never to estimate nor regard people according to their acquirements, but according to their character and good sense: for, had they possessed opportunities and advantages equally favourable to the improvement of their minds, they might have exercised their talents to better purpose. By the cultivation of my mind, the exercise of my reason, I hope, in future life, to fill up my station more rationally, and with a greater share of propriety than those who either have not had, or have voluntarily neglected the same means of improvement. To be reasonable in my judgment, liberal in my opinion, benevolent in my intentions, will, I hope, be the lasting practical effects of my present desires of information: ever to remark the great chain of Providence, every link of

which is necessary to the completion of his designs. The inequalities of good and evil in this life; the sufferings of virtue, the triumphs of vice: all this will be cleared up at the day of retribution. It is God who commands the raging of the seas, who, for wise designs, permits the existence of evil.

Jan. 22, 1809.—I feel the importance of a consistent and uniform devotedness to religion; and desire diligently to cultivate my heart, to watch over the risings of irregular tempers, and to repress every irritable thought. How delightful to be the means of infusing serenity and benevolence; to cheer the path of life by an habitual disposition to extract sweet from bitter, —the thorn from the rose!

Religion! what does it effect, unless the heart be transformed: meekness should take place of anger; kindness of revenge; love of hatred. To be decided in this momentous contest, to wage a constant warfare with the natural corruptions of the heart; this habitual decision alone can give that peace which the Gospel proclaims to be the portion of the upright. The heart must be devoted to God; the breathings of the soul must be after him; conformity to him must be the predominant principle of the soul. The wheels of time are rapidly rolling on; the contest, though it be severe, is short: and what is life? O! it is all important; here we perform our little part; but ah! an eternity depends on the right improvement of time. By the word of God I

shall be judged; how deeply conversant ought I then to be with its sacred contents, not to peruse it with the same carelessness as another book, but diligently to study it, and to meditate upon it. I ought to keep stated seasons for prayer and meditation. I should not be discouraged by want of fervour; for though the duty be at first discouraging, yet, by persevering in the use of the means, a blessing must ensue. O God! enable me thus to act.

Jan. 30, 1809.—In such a night as this, when every rising blast chills the soul, and threatens destruction to all around, I am ready to say, the Lord is abroad: who can now say, I rest securely? who is safe but he who can wrap himself in the arms of Omnipotence? and who defies storms and tempests to separate him from his love, who carries the lambs in his bosom? The righteous only shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Tempests remind us of thy existence, O God, of thy superintendence, and of our feebleness and dependence upon thee: the shakings of the nations, the concussions of the elements, all proclaim thy judgments.—O that they may not speak in vain! To lay up a treasure in heaven, that is wisdom; and though this life be troublous, and its path thorny,

> ——"Why grievous these appear,
> If all it pays for heaven's eternal year;
> If these sad sobs, and piteous sighs secure
> Delights that live, when worlds no more endure."

This is only a state of probation: born that we

may live for ever: why then should the delights of earth allure us to that precipice of pleasure, whence the soul dares not look beyond present enjoyments: it is a precipice, and a dangerous one. Death may receive its commission to summon us before His tribunal who demands the whole heart, who hates divided affections; if, instead of acting as immortal beings, we live in a state of sensation little superior to the brutes, whose appetites alone guide them; how awful must the state be when the union is dissolved between the body and the *living* principle within! When its faculties are no longer corporeally clouded, no more shackled by *sense;* how exquisite must be its feelings, how changed its capacities. May a constant preparation for the eternal world be a paramount consideration with me. May I have habitual desires of acquaintance with God, and cultivate a spirit of dependence upon him. O that the Spirit of God may enlighten my eyes, and illuminate my dark, benighted soul.

Feb. 19, 1809.—The grand resurrection of nature is now approaching, and the mind, attuned to contemplation, dilates with joy in listening to the first warblings of the grateful songsters; their cheerful notes seem their tribute of praise to Him who has fed them in the past season. The embryo blossoms, kind nature has preserved with much care, now burst forth. There lives and works a soul in all things; and that soul is God. How rich is nature in amusements! its varieties, what a field

for curiosity, wonder, and interest! The mind, abstracted by these delightful speculations, is independent; sources ever within reach, while they fill the mind with rapture, and point to the great *First Cause;* they instruct the heart; and, while the heavenly hosts fill the skies nightly with silent pomp, make us exclaim, Lord, what is man! And when an apprehension arises, that amidst the infinity of his works so insignificant a being might be overlooked, the unbelieving suggestion is quelled by the volume of nature; it is he that causes the grass to spring forth; it is he that gives the fowls of the air their food: he careth even for them! how much more then for man, whose being he sustains; and who was created in his image. The Christian desires to consecrate all his pursuits to the service of God; and whether his providential dominion be traced in history or in philosophy, all may be made subservient to the great end of our existence. To improve and cultivate the rational powers is worthy of an intelligent being, on whom God has bestowed an active living principle, independent of that body which is, for a season only its companion: this will mingle with the dust; but the soul, capable of pleasure and pain, will survive the world, and know no end.

Childhood is a state of probation for manhood, and this life for another. Virtue and vice, in a degree, receive their reward in this life; not completely so; it is the prerogative of Omniscience alone to assign hereafter rewards and punishments. I must then conclude that the

chief business of my life should be to secure the favour of my Creator: I am not left to wander in the mazes of philosophy, the erring dictates of fallen reason; their light was indeed darkness, darkness visible. Revelation, that meridian sun, has opened a way of access to the offended Deity: justice and mercy are reconciled, and man may be a partaker of the blessings of salvation.

April 30, 1809.—How delightful is the contemplation of the works of God! my enraptured eye runs over the productions of the earth with a curiosity and interest that never leave me: the passing clouds, the opening flowers, the sweet river, whose constant changes give a variety to the scenes, how successively do these steal on my imagination, and ofttimes how inexpressible is my gratitude for receiving from the hands of God so many outward blessings; and a mind capable of drawing the truest delight from them. But, O, yon beauteous cloud has vanished, and the flowers which I delight to view will fade and die; nature, and all her loveliness, is but transitory in her duration. Time with me has a destined period; but time is a loan, of the misimprovement of which my God will require a strict account. Does not reason imperiously demand that the Author of my being should receive the homage of my heart? thus far it goes, but no farther. Revelation takes me up where reason leaves me; it has drawn aside the veil, and made manifest a mode of access whereby the Deity

receives into the arms of his love the creature who had revolted from his government; but who returns with penitential tears, and asks for mercy through the atoning sacrifice.

O my soul! do thou press forward with more alacrity in the heavenly road; much is to be done; a corrupt heart must be renewed; the motives of thy conduct must be traced to the love of God; every attainment in knowledge must be consecrated to God, must be subservient to the end of thy being; and *humility* must mark every part of this deportment. How much is to be done! but what is the alternative? —*Endless blessedness*, or *endless misery*.

By prayer and dependence on God, I hope to overcome that slothfulness of spirit which has so much prevailed over me. I trace much to the loss of time in bed; it has occasioned me to hurry over my devotions, and produced a lassitude of mind which has operated sensibly on all my undertakings. I do propose now to rise *at or before six*, and offer my feeble orisons to God in a more becoming, heartfelt manner. My other studies to be *orderly* pursued. History, natural and moral philosophy, particularly Locke's Conduct of the Understanding. My heart ought to overflow with gratitude to that Being who has so profusely bestowed his mercies upon me. Had I lived in a town or city, how would the morning of my days have confined my understanding, cramped my views and my delights in the works of nature. Retirement, I thank thee; from thy calm influence I have

been taught to seek, in an improvement of my understanding, pleasures which live within my constant reach: the superiority of these, to the trifling, unsatisfactory vanities of the world, has made me hug them to my heart, and court their continued influence.

The following letter, containing the plan of a correspondence between her and her eldest brother is a proof of her early attention to the cultivation both of her mind and heart: and how much sound judgment and conscience were consulted, even in what was at that time considered as little else than recreation.

Lower Mall, Nov. 5, 1806.

My Dear Bbother,—A letter of very ancient date, (July 10,) now before me, silently reproves my negligence: the time which has elapsed might warrant your concluding I was wholly indifferent about engaging you as a correspondent, something or other has hitherto satisfied my conscience; farther pleas now fail, and I feel happy in the idea of addressing my dear Joseph at his own home; a period which has no doubt been anticipated in your youthful days, as an era of liberty not then enjoyed: now you are become your own master, your expectations of farther comfort rest in futurity; the next step will be that of becoming a family man; and so on.

I trust our hopes will extend beyond this life, and then we shall find a solace in the frustration

of those wishes, the accomplishment of which is always uncertain.

Now, that the winter is shutting in upon us, I am willing to hope you will derive the comfort I promise myself in the mutual communication of our thoughts: be our personal interviews ever so frequent, our correspondence may go on the same: and we may freely express on paper those sentiments that perhaps would have remained concealed from each other, but for this pleasing medium of conversing. You know, my dear Joseph, I am particularly fond of shutting myself in my closet on a winter's evening; and there spending some of the happiest moments of my existence with my pen or my book;—this comfort winter affords me: and I shall find it a great delight in these silent hours intimately to receive your thoughts on profitable subjects, and to express mine in return. I have now to subscribe to the agreement you drew up, and shall transcribe it for your use.

"We do hereby agree to correspond with each other in mutual confidence, with mutual desires for each other's *benefit* and *recreation;* promising mutually to *reprove* and admonish each other with Christian faithfulness, in the spirit of meekness:—farther, we agree to avoid all direct or indirect allusions to each other's attainments in our Christian calling, unless it be done with a view to exalt in each other a deeper sense of our obligations, and to point out the necessity of showing it forth by a more devoted life to the service of God; reminding one another

always that where much is given, much is required."

I could not have penned an agreement more to my own satisfaction: but this I have to remark; I may not at all times feel sincerely disposed to write on religious subjects—to confine letters to this may prove a temptation to express what you do not feel,—this would be hypocrisy. I may, as I am disposed, write my own reflections on various moral points, or remark something in the course of my reading: at the same time, I agree to every part of the above, and would by no means exclude that subject which most concerns us. Tell me, with the candour which will always pervade our letters, what you think of this, and whether you fully coincide with me? I make a point after I have been reading, to run over the subject in my own mind, and endeavour to reflect upon such parts as appear particularly worthy of consideration, comparing the sentiments of the author with my own—by this method I hope to derive more good from reading a little, and digesting that little, than I should do from reading thrice the quantity, without thinking of it afterward. I know you adopt this plan: your reflections would therefore greatly please me, and perhaps be impressed more on your own mind by the communication. I believe, my dear Joseph, we are as closely united in affection as by relative ties; therefore, as you observe, let us be faithful to reprove each other, and constant in writing. If we can by this means pro-

mote each other's spiritual advancement, we shall have reason to consider the talent improved. Let us have an intimate knowledge of each other, and do every thing to strengthen an affection that ought to subsist in full vigour between two so nearly allied.

Believe me, my dear brother, yours, truly,

M. HANSON.

The following letter, which is a part of the correspondence with her brother, already mentioned, contains many good sentiments; and some which are not of ordinary occurrence: it marks at the same time, the progress of religious conviction in her mind, and how seriously she was then in the pursuit of that, in which she afterward found solid happiness.

Lower Mall, Jan. 20, 1807.

MY DEAR JOSEPH,—I am convinced my letters have been generally very deficient in noticing the remarks of my correspondent; the mode you suggest will prove much more colloquial as well as productive of materials: it had never occurred to me how much my letters had failed in this respect. Be as candid in noticing every thing else that requires an alteration, whether it respects discourse or conduct, though I much fear that, as our opportunities of seeing each other are so rare, the intercourse necessary for reproof will but seldom occur; this I regret, for my proud spirit would bear reproof administered

with your wonted faithfulness and love. O! it would bear it much better from you than from any one; self-will and self-love so often obscure our better judgment, and thereby lead us into the mazes of error, that could the observing eye of a Christian friend be near, and just then remind us of the demands of Christianity upon our hearts, and the humility it inculcates and enforces; would not this check the progress of those moral vices upon our hearts? I sometimes think it would. But, my dear Joseph, if the friend were not near, there is a consideration of far greater importance: the eye of infinite purity ever beholds us! were this consideration oftener present to our minds, what a check would it be to the arrogance and pride of the heart. For my own part I feel the difficulty so immensely great, to maintain in my mind that sense of religion in any degree which the Christian must feel so as to influence his thoughts, words, and actions, that that character seems a wonder in creation. To persevere to the end, considering the temptations from within and without, is a marvellous proof of the efficacy of Divine grace. No wonder so many turn back; and yet when we reflect on the immense importance of preparing for a never-ending state of being, how great the delusion seems, to think of any thing occupying and absorbing the thoughts of creatures on the very verge of perdition. It is consolatory to the mind, my dear brother, amidst these reflections, that our attainment of eternal life does not depend on ourselves alone: *that*

grace, that has been implanted in the hearts of thousands now in glory, and had brought forth fruits to the praise of God, may yet be had of him, "whom to know is wisdom, whom to fear is rectitude, whom to love is happiness."

It is the hope of victory that animates soldiers in battle; they bear temporary privations and numerous hardships, in prospect of the glory accruing from conquest; and yet how short-lived is that compared with the crown of glory for which I trust you and I, my dear brother, will fight manfully; it is for an incorruptible crown, one which we shall wear for ever.

* * * * * * *

I love retirement, and would scrupulously avoid acquaintance with the world; for to keep in tolerable humour with it, it is necessary to know but little of it, and to think of the most virtuous of your acquaintance; for when one surveys the characters of people in general, and observes the dissimulation pervading most of them, it is difficult to preserve that spirit of benevolence that ought never to be damped. You tell me you have purchased freedom from control and restraint at the price of additional cares and anxieties. In reviewing the past, its evils usually diminish in our apprehensions, while we feel the present in their full force. You will find the habitual effects of your employing leisure time in the pursuit and knowledge of Christian virtues. How desirable to feel the inclination! press forward, my dear

brother, and shine like a candle in a dark place; you are in a new state of trial, sufficient grace for every day is promised you; only sincerely ask, and you will surely receive.

There is something truly delightful in that freedom true love ever inspires, in the communication of one's inmost thoughts: we were formed social beings, and I think the communion of saints, as expressed in the creed, must be a mean of accelerating and enlivening the affections, and inspiring love and zeal to the Supreme Being. I can freely think aloud to you, my dear Joseph, for I greatly hope our correspondence will prove a mean of my advancing in that life divine after which I sometimes pant.

I hope it will be convenient to you to write soon; never apologize for any but short letters; none but such fatigue me.

Believe me your most affectionate sister,

MARY HANSON.

Early in the year 1809 Miss Hanson began to attend the preaching among the Methodists. The first preachers she heard were Dr. Coke and Dr. Clarke. From this period religion became the one great business of her life, and she, in a more especial manner, was engaged in doing good to her fellow creatures; in visiting and relieving the poor and distressed, whom she endeavoured to instruct by reading the Scriptures to them, praying with and speaking

to them of spiritual things, and of the eternal world. But her own diary is her most faithful biographer; and by it the reader will perceive that she now began to take a very different view of religion to what she had ever done before. She considered it no longer as a system of opinions and moral practice merely, but as a *work in the heart*, or in other words, *the life of God in the soul of man;* which, when once introduced, would necessarily manifest itself in a full conformity to his *will* and *word*, in all her passions, tempers, affections, and conduct. On this important subject she thus speaks:—

July 2, 1809.—For the last two months my attention and reading has been much confined to theology: two sermons, one by Dr. Adam Clarke, and the other by Dr. Coke, preached at the Methodist chapel here, roused my inquiry as to the peculiar sentiments of that people.

Those sermons have made a deep impression on my mind; the first showed me, in a manner I was not aware of, the connection of reason and religion, how far they were in union with each other, where the one left us, the other took us up, and introduced us to the immortality of glory; the other sermon gave a view of religion in the soul, of the inhabitation of the Spirit of God; I was roused; there was a something in their mode of explaining Scripture, of enforcing the

importance of religion, of proving the vanity of sublunary things, and the sublime tendency of religion in exalting the soul and making it aspire after a likeness to God, that was new to me—I was excited to more exertion; and from reading the Life of the Rev. Mr. Fletcher, one of the Wesleyans' bright ornaments, I was introduced to a character that filled my soul with reverence, delight, and an aspiration after that grace which made him what he was. Some of his works were lent to me, and all I read confirmed me in an opinion of the soundness of their Scriptural views. I never embraced the doctrines of Calvin, but when I viewed the scurrility, the intemperance in controversy, of some who are called by his name, and compared all this with the Christian meekness of Wesley, and his amiable advocate Fletcher, I was convinced of the goodness of the cause. I saw also that their doctrines, while they insured an entire reliance on Christ for justification, demanded an evidence of that by aspiring after holiness of heart and life; and maintained that it is by the fruits of faith that faith will be judged of at the day of judgment.

The general nonconformity of that sect to the world, their zeal in the promotion of vital, practical godliness, as far as I can judge, both from their principles and practice, proclaim them the followers of the Lamb. I rejoice in their introduction to H——, and the prosperity which apparently attends their labours. On the Monday evening I go and hear the same truths

applied to the hearts and understandings of all present; I hear them, I hope, with increasing profit. I have too long rested in an admiration of sermons as *compositions*. Lured by imagination and eloquence, I have been charmed; but, alas! my heart has remained careless, and too much disposed to regard religion as *a general thing*, without applying it to my own heart: may I henceforward hear as for eternity! O how much is at stake! and why do I live, if the salvation of my soul be neglected! When this frail tabernacle of clay shall be dissolved, which it soon must be, the soul will have burst its fetters, and know an existence of endless wo or happiness. My lot in life is then but of little consequence, for the *stage is but short* on which we act.

Being about to accompany the family on a visit to Margate, she wrote as follows:—

Aug. 13, 1809.—For a while then I am about to leave thee, my dear peaceful H——; the delights of calm reflection and solitude, which, through the goodness of my Creator, I have experienced in this my own room, make me almost disposed to think happiness local. I go, and shall witness the whirl of fashion, and the various expedients fallen man devises for filling up that vacuum, that search after comfort, to which every breast is a prey. I have experienced the vanity and unsatisfying nature of its enjoyments. The pearl of great price is the jewel I pant to obtain, to have an evidence within my own soul, that the spirit which by nature is depraved is re-

newed by grace; that my judgment and affections are purified from sin, and that the paramount desire of my heart is to live to the glory of my God. Well then, what is change of place to me? I cannot go where my God is not: he pervades every place: his Spirit is near to those that seek him; and the soul that has felt and enjoyed sweet communion with him cannot be absorbed and satisfied by the vain and trifling pleasures this world offers.

As the means of grace are very various at Margate, I trust I shall be able in simplicity of heart to obtain much good from them. O that the critical spirit which has so long haunted me, and robbed me of the benefit the humble follower enjoys, may leave me. I go not to hear fine compositions, but to hear the word of God faithfully explained; and to prove my own experience by the unerring standard of Scripture. I hope to enjoy the delights of meditation and reading by the sea shore; and, ere the bustle of the day approaches, to rise early and seek God in his works, and ponder over his ways. O that I could live more under the impression of the eternal world that awaits me, the judgment that will come when every man will be judged according to his works. Death will be decisive to my soul, and "dangers stand thick through all the ground to push us to the tomb." O, my soul, be not satisfied till thou hast evidence of acceptance with God; till thy worldly and corrupt affections are renewed; till thou have resigned thyself entirely to God, and

every wish and desire be subservient to him! To shine as a light in the world, this is the Christian's object; to do good to his fellow creatures, to strive by every means to do good to their souls, to visit the sick, and comfort those who are cast down. God can give strength to the weak, and he does it that his power may be made manifest. One instance of his goodness in blessing feeble means, I would acknowledge in the happy death of a dear child who went to the Sunday school; those hymns which I took so much delight in teaching her consoled her amidst pain and death. I thank God, and would receive this as an encouragement to future and more unwearied exertion. I go, not knowing I shall ever return; but I trust I can lay my hand on my heart, and say, My trust and dependence for this life and eternal salvation is on Christ, who died to redeem a fallen world; and who is near to all who call upon him.

O for faith to trust in that word which can introduce heaven into the soul, even in the tumultuous ocean of life!

Margate, August 16, 1809.—After a most delightful passage of nine hours and a half, arrived safe at Margate; every thing, both health and company, conspired to render it agreeable.

The appearance of the town pleases me much, and I already anticipate much pleasure, more particularly as there are such various means of grace. I hope to have my mind

kept free for the reception of Divine truth, that the gayety I shall witness may not draw my heart aside, and induce me once again to cull the flowers of pleasure; which, by the fascination of their appearance, lure the unwary.

The noble ocean, on which the grandeur of the Deity is marked in such large characters, will be the object I shall most delight to contemplate; to say, "My Father made it all." O the exquisite sensation arising from such an application.

Aug. 17, 1809.—Had a most delightful ride to Ramsgate, through Kingsgate and Broadstairs; with the first of these places I am charmed: there is great elegance in the appearance of the town from the pier; and as to that beautiful harbour, it delights and astonishes me more than any human construction I have ever seen: the sea from thence is a most magnificent spectacle. The country through which we rode is highly cultivated, and the bounties of harvest are just ready to be poured into the lap of ungrateful man: how beneficent is the Creator to the whole human race! how seldom is his hand acknowledged! he who should be the first in every man's thoughts! Bountiful Creator, how art thou slighted, and thy benevolence insulted by its abuse! Heard a very good preacher at lady Huntingdon's chapel; it was well attended. For nearly two hours I enjoyed the lightning this evening. I become more and more enchanted with the terrible and sublime in nature. To gaze upon the ethereal

flash as it bursts from the bosom of the dark thunder cloud, has an effect upon my mind with which I would not part for the finest show of art. It was not in the direction of the sea, or my admiration would have been twofold: whence this delight but from the power such spectacles have of raising my soul to the Supreme Being; of making me aspire after a union with him who is thus terrible in nature; it excites me to anticipate that day when the lightnings of his wrath shall strike the devoted heads of those who have neglected him; when every element will do its part to excite the general conflagration; when an interest in the Saviour will secure me an admission into the paradise of God. For such a crown of glory, O why should I loiter; why should the flintiness of the path make me look aside for the broad road of pleasure, in which thousands smoothly walk to the edge of the precipice: and unless arrested by the power of God, plunge headlong into eternal darkness!

Aug. 18.—Rose this morning at six o'clock, walked as far as Newgate on the Cliff; thence we descended to the sands. I particularly admire the cliffs about this place; they are beautifully bleached and battered by the waves. A most profound stillness reigned; not even the murmur of the sea broke the silence; nothing, save the fluttering of a little bird on whose solitude I had intruded; it is in such a silence the soul delights to expand, and, as it were, burst the fetters which confine it when in commerce

with the world. With mingled delight and reverence I view our sea-girt shore, and those beauteous cliffs which have so long defied the power and malice of our enemies. I know not why; perhaps I have now a greater power of enjoyment; but they appear to me more charming than any thing I have seen.

This evening walked half way to Kingsgate; it was very retired, which consequently added to my enjoyment: there is one eminence which commands a very lovely view of Margate and North Down. The clearness and serenity of the evening conspired to heighten the beauty of the scene; added to which, the corn in sheaves, and the thankfulness with which my heart dilated in viewing the treasures of Providence, rendered the whole increasingly delightful. O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness! "Ye harvests, wave to him."

The accounts I had were so unfavourable, I feel astonished at the beauties of Margate: the country which I have seen is as rich and lovely as I ever saw:—perhaps, indeed, few have hearts so susceptible to the beauties of nature. "Not a cloud imbibes the setting sun's effulgence, not a strain from all the tenants of the warbling shade ascends from which my bosom cannot partake fresh pleasure unreproved." From this *honeyed* store ten thousand enjoyments have hovered over my path, and to my capability of deriving reflections from the objects which surround me I am indebted for a local repository of comfort. I thank God that

retirement and exemption from gayety have produced this good.

On our return about eight o'clock, we must needs peep at the gay Babel, and feel the stir; the town was all light and bustle; the libraries were crammed full with gay flutterers, dressed as for an assembly; the rooms elegantly lighted, and all, all vanity; "*a world without souls.*" My soul, come not thou into their secret, lest I should practically forget that I have a soul; and an immortal one; to save which I must watch and strive against temptation; scenes of vanity and dissipation must be avoided; there is enough within to draw thee from God. O, then, avoid outward temptations; go not under pretence of moralizing on its vanity: the experiment is dangerous: God and mammon can never be reconciled.

Aug. 19, 1809.—After a pleasant walk of two hours, returned home quite refreshed and comfortable. On entering the room I found my dear mother bathed in tears, with a letter before her containing an account of brother William's sudden attack of a most violent fever; the means prescribed by Mr. Pearson prove it to be highly putrid; he was considered, when B—— wrote, rather out of danger; the only alleviation we could have under such circumstances. O, my God! if my dear brother still live, grant that this sickness may not be unto death, but for his soul's health! Vigorous as his health has been, yet the shafts of death are as likely to wound him as the more sickly.

All these circumstances should prove as incentives to my diligence in the Divine life. Nothing can secure me from the sudden and unwarned approach of death; he, with his fatal scythe, may mow down (one after another) every dear earthly comfort I possess. God alone is unchangeable, and the source of comfort; he pours balm into the wounded spirit; and bids it seek its treasures in those blessed regions where bliss is complete and inexhaustible.

Aug. 23, 1809.—Through the goodness of God my dear brother William is better. I have enjoyed some sweet seasons of abstraction from the world on Sunday, and since. What is my object as a Christian? It is to increase in faith, and in conformity to the image of God; to have that stamped on my soul, and to feel the presence of God diffuse itself through my heart and my judgment. Then I am not of the world; my views, pleasures, and pursuits, must be different; they are only dead fish that float *down* the stream; I must swim *against* it. If the world hate you, marvel not; they laugh and flutter for a day, and perish. The Christian strives and fights for a day, and his toil and labour are ended; everlasting rest and perfect peace are his reward for ever. O glorious prospect!

That glorious Being who created this lower world, who by his word formed all those beauteous scenes in creation which now ravish my eyes, made all these for man! what then will

the visions of eternal bliss be for the redeemed? when every faculty of the soul will be in full vigour and purity, when God will be all in all. How many have I read of in history who have waded through scenes of blood, who have sacrificed every present pleasure and enjoyment, and thought nothing too much while a hope or chance remained of having an earthly crown placed on their heads; and this with a probability of very soon falling a sacrifice to their own ambition.

Christian, be ashamed of thy supineness; be not satisfied with the husks of this world, while there is heavenly manna within thy reach: they sought a corruptible crown; thou hast offered to thee an incorruptible one. Be assured, however hard the struggle against sin, yet, having attained the conquest, so peaceful a serenity shall be diffused through thy soul, as shall repay all the toil and labour. A Christian must fight the good fight of faith.

Heard this evening a most animating sermon from Mr. Liefchild, "For we shall see him as he is." His descriptions were so lively, that I almost thought he had had a peep at the glories of the eternal world. O vain transitory world, what are thy pleasures? fleeting as a shadow.

I pant for everlasting bliss, for a state of happiness which neither knows interruption nor end.

Aug. 28, 1809.—I exceedingly enjoyed the services of yesterday; it was a Sabbath of de-

light to my soul; I was three times at the Methodist chapel, where I heard a young man of promising talents, appointed by the conference for the ensuing year. In the morning his sermon was on prayer, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much:" he showed its advantages in prosperity: how the blessings of Providence were doubly enjoyed by a sense of the goodness of the benefactor; the mind kept humble, and from vaunting itself against those who are in a lower situation, from a grateful acknowledgment to the Divine Being; that it is from his hand alone such blessings are bestowed: and that temporal superiority is alone from him who dispenses his gifts. I note this particularly, because prosperity appears to me a great trial to the Christian; when surrounded by present good, in possession of health, wealth, and friends, O how prone to say, "Soul, take thine ease;" while sailing on a smooth sea, the anticipation of the harbour is not half so delightful as when tossed on the angry billows; then the sight of port, how does it animate and refresh; and yet, as good Mr. Day says, what base ingratitude is it, to make those very blessings our Creator bestows upon us the means of forgetting him; and by an abuse of the good things of this life to destroy our souls.

I am now in possession of health and every temporal blessing; ought I not particularly to devote myself to that God who has made *me* a recipient of such various and unmerited bless-

ings? The only return, the only tribute of gratitude I can render to thee, thou God of love, is, to give up my heart, all I have and am, to thy service: to answer the great end of my existence, by a continual acknowledgment of that goodness which brought me into being and sustains it; but above all, for a hope of eternal life through the great atoning sacrifice. His precious death and resurrection is the life of all my hopes; all my desire is to repose in the arms of his mercy, and to be with him for ever. O unspeakable love! While I can hear with so much advantage as I did yesterday, I shall go to the Methodist chapel; there is a plainness and simplicity in the appearance of the chapel and people, which suit my mind better than Zion chapel. Beside, there is a something in their mode of preaching which I always find profitable; there is a view of eternity in their addresses to the Deity, which rouses and fixes my attention. I do most entirely agree with the sentiments of that people. John Wesley's opinions accord with those I long since formed from reading the Bible. I seem to catch the flame, the heavenly flame, which burns among them; their nonconformity to the world, and their gradual assimilation to the Divine nature, the happy assurance so many among them have. O, it is religion in its power, in its peaceful and holy effects.

In the afternoon of yesterday was the prayer meeting. In the evening the same young man displayed considerable ability in discoursing

from 1 Cor. i, 23: "We preach Christ crucified." His sermon contained a summary of those doctrines he intended to deliver among that people; most ably he defended the divinity of our Lord. I enjoyed uncommon peace and liveliness of mind yesterday; prayer, instead of a weariness, was a delight to me.

O Christianity, thou wast ushered into the world, as "peace and good will to man;" and so thou art and ever wilt be to those who receive thy glorious truths in meekness, with a practical desire of conforming the soul to the Divine image. Those who advance in grace will advance in happiness; the more this world is subdued, the brighter, the more glorious, will be the anticipation of that state which God has appointed as the resting place for all his people.

Sept. 1, 1809.—On Monday had a very delightful ride to Minster; it is surrounded by many trees, and is altogether picturesque and beautiful.

The church is a very ancient structure; and the churchyard, which is very large, contains but few graves. How different to the crowded cemeteries about London! I like to visit every repository of the dead where I go; no mean surely should be neglected to familiarize that solemn certain event, which will soon arrive. From an eminence about a mile from Minster, I had a view of the whole island of Thanet; the sea girds a great part of it; at one point is seen the Downs, in which the vessels look like a forest; to the right of that is a very fine cul-

tivated land view; it reminded me much of Portsdown.

On our return we rode through Birchington: we visited its churchyard, a favourite place of my brother Joseph's. I saw three beautiful epitaphs which I intend to go purposely to copy. Here is a very fine view of the Reculvers. My mind was just in a frame to enjoy the beauties of nature, and to adopt the language of Cowper, "My Father made them all;" my eyes were full of tears when I thought of this blessed relation.

On Tuesday evening we rode through St. Peters to Broadstairs; then to part of the Ramsgate road, where we had a very distinct view of the coast of France, Pegwell bay, and the ships in its harbour. The sun set in cloudless splendour just behind St. Peter's church. We returned through Kingsgate, having passed the Fore-land lighthouse, just then lighted up. It is a lovely village; its beauty was much heightened by the last faint gleam of the setting sun upon its various ruins. I find much to interest me in this island.

Wednesday morning we walked on the sands, visited some of the caverns; scenes rude and wild; we much enjoyed it; sitting at the foot of one of the cliffs, we listened to the murmuring of the flowing tide.

Such scenes are favourable to abstraction of mind. How is the soul to be pitied, which in such scenes does not recognize the finger of God! which does not seek a friend in him who

has such boundless power. The 38th chapter of Job, how appropriate to such scenes.

In the evening brother B——n and I walked on the fort between ten and eleven. The lightning had just ceased; but the clouds, full of electricity, hung over the deep most sublimely. Over our heads the stars were shining in unclouded lustre. In the eastern hemisphere was the moon reposing on clouds of the darkest hue, whose summits were tipped with glowing light; again she awoke from her sleep, and shed her trembling beams on the boundless ocean. Such scenes delight and ravish my eyes above all this world affords; they raise my thoughts to Him, who by a word brought all this immensity into existence. "Lord, what is man?" How vain are all the pomps of this our world. I would soar to those regions where my soul will be satisfied with a view of Him who, though *infinite*, views with delight the spirit who seeks his favour.

Sept. 8, 1809.—There is certainly more real pleasure and solid satisfaction in the fulfilment of domestic plans of usefulness, than are to be found in the varieties of a new place and new scenes: these soon cease to charm; and the want of full occupation and means of being actively useful, press on my mind. I do not lie down at night with the pleasing reflection that I have imparted comfort to the aged by being eyes to them, and reading to them a portion of that word which is so much their support; nor can I reflect on having endeavoured to

speak a word for religion to the careless poor, &c. I seem almost to live in vain, and long for the return of that solid satisfaction which an endeavour at usefulness inspires.

I have spent two evenings at the bathing room very pleasantly. The gallery which overlooks the sea is delightful. On one evening I saw the phosphoric illumination of the waves. I have occasionally met with two very sensible women there; one an officer's widow, young and lively; the other appears about thirty, single and an invalid: with the latter I had a good deal of serious conversation; she seems *generally* impressed with the importance of religion; and although not abstracted from the gayeties of life, has but little relish for them. Her judgment seems more powerful than her resolution. I do indeed feel for such characters, who, while halting between two opinions, find enjoyment in neither; they feel the aching void within: the world denies them comfort; Heaven offers it, but they refuse.

Sept. 15, 1809.—Walked to North Down, my favourite village; it unites the beauties of landscape and sea views, and contains many very pretty farm houses.

From thence we crossed the fields to the Walpole-wreck; walked for some distance on the cliff, and then descended to the sands, which we found remarkably firm. The tide was fast coming in: the azure sky reflected a most lovely peacock hue on the sea. The flocks of ocean were abroad: we ran toward them, and kissed them with our feet.

The cliffs in that part are strikingly wild; and the deep solitude which there reigned among the caverns, added to the beauty of the marine productions, produced in us almost an ecstasy. In such scenes I am an enthusiast, and hardly know what other circumstances could produce equal rapture.

The solemn silence which pervaded those scenes, rude and wild, very much added to the interest they excited in my mind.

Sept. 16, 1809.—This day another year is added to my mortal existence. Has the past year added any improvement to the preceding ones? It demands self-recollection. How large the catalogue of mercies; of Divine favours!—Where shall I begin to speak of goodness so boundless? No chasm made among my earthly friends; my dear parents still spared; yet in possession of earthly abundance: still in the enjoyment of health, reason, and all other faculties. My heart alone is the offering I can make to God for so many favours. I hope I do record it with humble gratitude, that for the last six months my affections have been more given to God and religion than the preceding six months; that I have been more alive to the requirements of Christianity upon my heart: I have found more delight in devotion, and greater desires after conformity to the Divine image: in short, religion has appeared to me the one thing needful; and the attainment of eternal glory the grand end of my existence.

I feel daily more and more the need of watchfulness and the influence of the Spirit to keep alive my good desires and resolutions; for I know my heart is deceitful and the world alluring. Experience has shown me, that one great cause of religious declension is a carelessness in devotion, and neglect of reading the Scriptures; hence I would have *set* seasons for both, and conscientiously observe them: also attend punctually, and as frequently as circumstances will admit, preaching in the week evenings; I have found the benefit of this. The worldly are very *eager* in the pursuit of their pleasures; pleasures which produce satiety—shall I then, who am a probationer for heavenly pleasures, be *slow* in seeking them—and shall I suffer every little trifle to rob me of them? O, forbid it! It is not an earthly shadow, but an eternal substance I seek after. It demands my constant attention, my most fervent devotions.

Let not the universal carelessness which prevails about unseen things *deter me*. Our Lord foretold this: he says, the gate is strait, and but few *enter it;* but he also forewarns me of that place where the worm never dies.

I do record it, on this anniversary of my birth, that I desire more devotedly than I ever have done to give myself up, all I have and am, to my God; to press forward in the Divine life, and to aim at that perfection which is the glory and happiness of the saints. These are my birthday hopes and resolutions; and my hand-

writing will witness against me if I swerve from these paths of religion and peace.

I hope I have gained something from observation the past year. I live to but little purpose if experience do not teach me; and if the commission of error in one instance do not deter me from the same when a similar occasion offers.

I made some progress in history last winter; the ensuing one I purpose reading either Hume's or Rapin's History of England: and yet, alas! how much time is taken up with trifles: for instance, I sit down to work, I loiter, I perhaps read in the interim, or look off; I wish to correct this, and when I return home to have more *entire order* in my pursuits; to husband time, as that for which I must give account. May the succeeding year, if I live to complete it, find me more decidedly devoted to God; less earthly-minded, and abounding more in good works. *Mark this*, religion is a progressive work, no standing still; either on the *advance* or on the *decline*—if it dwells in the soul, it will transform the nature, subdue evil, and be gradually assimilating it to the Divine image.

I have received a letter from my dear Mary Ann* to-day; my friendship for her glows with undiminished ardour. I thank God for the gift of such a friend. I hope we shall more and more stimulate and stir up each other to the pursuit of objects which are Divine; and to

* Miss W., a pious young lady, one of her most intimate acquaintances.

resign our *all* entirely to our heavenly Father, who careth for those who seek his face.

Sept. 17, 1809.—I have heard three very excellent discourses from the venerable Mr. Bull, in consequence of a sudden illness of Mr. Lake: he officiated at Zion chapel. His sermon from Prov. ix, 5, had a reference to the Lord's Supper, which he afterward administered in his own way. In the afternoon he preached from 1 Cor. i, 30. In the evening he was induced to choose for his text, Psalm xxiii, 4, in consequence of the death of a Mr. Atkinson, who the last Sunday was a hearer in that chapel.

To hear such a Christian who is on the verge of glory, on the tiptoe of heavenly expectation; to hear him discourse on death, O! it is soothing and encouraging to the mind. He has given me a new view of the text; by the metaphor of a shadow how much consolation is implied! "As the Hebrew poets often availed themselves of objects in nature to illustrate their meaning, so he supposed that the figure, the shadow of death, was borrowed from a very deep and dark valley, through which the brook Cedron passed. Through this valley our dear Saviour passed, in going to the garden of Gethsemane. The dark valley then is not death, but the shadow of it. The believer does not die at all: it is but the shadow of death. Conceive death in its most tremendous form; yet, being a *shadow*, there is no real substantial reason for you to fear it: you walk *through* it,

do not *stand in it;* and the Shepherd is at the end of the valley to receive you. The rod signifies a crook, by which a shepherd may bring back a wandering sheep: it also implies afflictions and trials. They are generally attendant on death. By the staff is meant, that power by which God supports and comforts his people: by the rod of affliction, and the staff of comfort, they safely pass through the valley, and reach the place of eternal repose." I have imperfectly noted a few of the remarks which struck me.

Oct. 2, 1809.—I enjoyed my walk very much before breakfast; the weather mild and peaceful; quite a contrast to what it has been for the last fortnight. Walked on my favourite Kingsgate road, as far as the Mill-hill: thence crossed the fields to Newgate, which I descended, and sat at the foot of the cliff for some time; not a sound to break the deep repose; the state of my mind accorded with it. I found much delight in that part of Baxter's Saints' Rest, in which he enforces consideration as a chief help to heavenly contemplation. If the weather permit, I will repeat my early visits to that sacred spot: the time for my leaving them is near at hand.

This evening there was a watch-night at the Methodist chapel: the first time of my ever being at one. It began at seven, and ended at half past nine. It was a very solemn service. Mr. Cusworth preached, Mr. Williams delivered an exhortation, and several of the society

engaged in prayer. The brevity and uncertainty of life were chiefly dwelt upon, and the importance of preparing for our latter end: the whole was conducted in a very serious and impressive manner.

Oct. 5, 1809.—Almost the whole of yesterday morning, from half past six, I was strolling by the sea side, among cliffs and sands. I shall soon leave them, and that with much regret. My recollections of the two months I have spent here must ever be pleasing to me; and my heart now exults with praise to God that so much of my enjoyment has been derived from love to him and his works. Whenever I have sought retirement I have found it; hence the bustle and gayety of the place have not offended me. I have chiefly attended at the Wesleyan chapel; and have been much pleased, and I hope profited, by the preaching of Mr. Williams. He manifests great theological knowledge; and his preaching is quite of an experimental cast. I do become increasingly attached to the Wesleyans: their preaching appears to me to combine more of the *whole Gospel* than I have before heard: there is an earnestness in their addresses which tends to keep alive the flame of Divine love in my heart, to give me fervour in prayer, and enlighten my understanding of the Scriptures.

This morning we took a delightful walk with Joseph to a very rustic village called *Nash;* surrounded by a great many trees, in the midst of which we discovered a mud-wall thatched

cottage, the most rude of its kind I ever beheld; every thing around it completed the picture. I crept through the wicket gate, and was determined to see the inside; where I found a good woman, who gave me a welcome peep at her little cot, in which every thing was very comfortable. She had lived there thirty years, and has eight children now grown up.

This evening I took a farewell evening walk in Hubbard's gallery; a lovely starlight night: the sea rolled in sublimely; rather phosphoric. I had a very pleasing conversation with brother Joseph: we compared our occasional feelings of rapture in contemplating the works of God; surely of all earthly enjoyments the most sublime, pure, and refined. Nature is an exhaustless store of entertainment.

Oct. 6, 1809.—Arose at dawn this morning to see Joseph off for London. The morning star shone with splendour; while

> Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
> With rosy lustre purpled o'er the lawn.

The sun had just unbarred the portals of the east, when I hasted forth to enjoy his splendour. Agreeably to my intention yesterday, I visited the favourite field of my dear brother Joseph: it was so lovely that I lingered for a while, contemplating the enchanting effects of a morning sun laying his golden beams on woods, fields, and streams.

Ah! what do the slothful lose. I had my second collection of poetry, in which I found parts highly adapted to enhance my enjoyment

of the scene; some of the Psalms I read with peculiar delight; particularly those three which begin "The Lord reigneth." I then proceeded to Dandelion; the gardens are pretty, and refreshing to the sight. The larks, as I walked, sung their morning song sweetly: every thing was so lovely, that, though the distance was great, I found no fatigue: my heart was, indeed, uplifted to nature's God, from whom I derived springs of comfort and exultation. O blessed seasons! in which I have wandered forth, alone, and found my solitude more sweet, more animating, than could be produced by all the artificial means the world offers.

I walked again from eleven to two, and explored nearly the whole of North Down: it is remarkably shady: and the hedges in the lanes particularly luxuriant: the cottages and farm houses are strikingly picturesque. As I walked I read a great part of the second volume of Mrs. West's Letters; in which, as in the first, she displays great acuteness of observation, and an uncommon sense of moral propriety. As to religion, she defends our establishment in all its parts, and is, indeed, quite its eulogist; seceding from it seems, indeed, a high crime and misdemeanor. But there appears to me a grand deficiency in her system; while advocating a rational religion she puts aside that vital experimental piety which is so manifestly insisted on in the New Testament; and the fanaticism of a few misguided zealots has induced her to conclude all religious feeling to be enthusiasm.

In this part she is very exceptionable, as also in her endeavour to unite the *world* and *religion*, which I must ever think incompatible. Notwithstanding this, she gives proof of having thought and read much on Christianity; and some very good remarks are the result.

I bade a long farewell to those sweet scenes on which I have often gazed with rapture.

Oct. 10, 1809.—We left Margate on the 7th, and reached Canterbury in the afternoon, where we met with a very welcome reception from our kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. G——.

The country about Canterbury is more beautifully picturesque than any I have ever before seen. Before breakfast I went to see the Dane John, a mound of earth said to have been thrown up by the Danes in one night;—it has a circular walk to the top, which commands a fine view of the city and country; near it are the ruins of an old castle: the fortifications are in this part in good preservation. The ruins of St. Augustine's monastery are a very fine object. After breakfast took a country walk; saw St. Martin's church, the oldest in England; remarkable only for its antiquity and situation. It was well I saw Margate first; the country here is so much superior, that the comparison would not have been favourable; yet I shall ever think of Margate, as having there enjoyed such heart-felt pleasure in her less lovely walks.

Oct. 11, 1809.—I attended cathedral service, and afterward walked through the building.

The antiquity of this church, its renown in history, excited in my mind a peculiar interest. Its exterior is very grand. As it was erected in the darkest ages of popery, it contains many relics of its thraldom. A hundred thousand pilgrims, from all parts of the world, in one year, paid their devotions at the shrine of Thomas à Becket! The stone steps they ascended, quite worn into a curve, appear to authenticate this. An altar was erected near the tomb of Edward the Black Prince, before which, mass, morning and evening, was offered up for the peace of his soul! The step on which these devotees knelt is also worn into hollows. I saw a confessional also: my heart rose with thankfulness to that God who has caused those days of darkness to cease.—There were two or three pieces of sculpture which excited my admiration more than any I ever before saw: one of Dean Wootton, in which he is represented as kneeling before an altar of the most beautiful stone work: his posture is life, and the countenance is expressive to a wonderful degree, particularly the ears. Another, of the founder of Oxford university: there were two representations of him; one of his appearance when in full health, stout and handsome: below it, in the same posture, you see him as he was when he died, a mere skeleton, exquisitely executed. Above are twelve images of the apostles, and one of the same size representing Death: on the corresponding side is a figure of Time with his scythe. To

discover all the beauties of this place would require several hours' inspection. The chair on which the kings of Kent were crowned is there; and is said to be the greatest piece of antiquity in England; on it the archbishops are installed into their office. The depredations of Cromwell are manifested in various places.

I ascended the belfry, two hundred and fourteen steps high: the prospect which the highest tower commands is too beautiful for description. The city, with its various ruins, added to the uncommon richness of the country; the river Stour beautifully meandering through the richest vales, and the distant view of the cliffs near Ramsgate, surpass description.

Oct. 18, 1809.—The remains of my darling nephew I have just seen committed to the cold and silent tomb. All that pertains to death is awfully impressive; and if we go not beyond the eye of sense, it is overwhelming. Can the mortal part charm when the spirit has left it? O no. Why is it then that the body, which must so soon turn to corruption, occupies so large a portion of our thoughts? It is vain. The spirit which animated it cannot die, cannot see corruption:—hence those who live a life of sense, whose thoughts are occupied in decking this corruptible clay, have strangely lost the right perception of things. How awful is our state, independent of revelation! Of few days and full of trouble. The flowers which to-day delight and ravish our eyes, to-

morrow are cut down and withered. All on earth must say to corruption, Thou art my mother, and to the worm, Thou art my sister. Such is our destiny by nature. But thou, my soul, hast higher hopes, and sublimer expectations: thy immortal interests are, through grace, thy chief concern: thou hast been taught by the word of God, that though the outward tabernacle be dissolved, thou hast a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Joyful prospect! Live but in the preparation for this, and death will lose its sting, the grave its terrors, and the world its charms. Well then, be not cast down; all on earth is changeable: there is no rest here: thou hast proved its insufficiency to impart one moment's real solid satisfaction. But God is unchangeable; his arms of mercy are ever open to receive those who seek him; his promises are as eternal as his nature. The only wisdom is to seek God, and to prepare to meet him. Remember, O my soul, that every day thou art called upon to remember thy God, to seek his favour, and to *begin* here that employ which is the bliss of angels and glorified spirits. Religion, if it exist in the soul, must subdue sin; it must be manifested in every action of the life; tempers must be sanctified, holy dispositions implanted. These are the evidences of a state of grace; it is this which makes the soul easy under all the afflictions of life; by the simple act of faith, the looking unto Jesus, these blessed effects will follow.

This is the blessed union which subsists between Christ and his people; these are the evidences of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which can make the Christian joyous, happy, and even triumphant, in the anticipation of that event which I have this day witnessed.

The silent tomb must be my last mortal abode: it may be very soon. The dear child three days before he died was apparently in the bloom of health and beauty. Death, having received his commission, unbarred to him the gates of paradise. and presented him as a trophy of the Redeemer's blood. And, O! if when mortal paleness is on *my* cheek, glory be but in my soul; kind messenger, with all thy gloomy train, I will welcome thy approach, and hail thee as a friend.

Oct. 30, 1809.—Once again I have the enjoyment of my quiet home. Mercy has surrounded me ever since I left it; mercy now gladdens my heart, and makes me in some degree possess that peace which passeth understanding. Shall I ever leave those paths of religion on which I have entered? Ever return to that world with which I am at variance? O! no. With the practice of religion is connected much enjoyment; in the experience of religion are found the peace and joy which fill and satisfy the immortal soul. It is only the Spirit of God which can satisfy the spirit of man: religion alone affords objects worthy of its regard.

How many motives have I for constant

prayer, for daily importunity with God, that I may be *kept* in the paths of life and happiness! For this end I must continue to use those means which the Holy Spirit hath blessed to me. If I forsake God I shall lose the light of his countenance, bring bitterness on my soul, and disgrace my profession. O, blessed God! I desire again to devote myself to thy service; I give thee my heart, and would entreat thee to impart a portion of thy Spirit, that every faculty of my soul may be renewed.

Nov. 10, 1809.—This morning the Wesleyan chapel was opened by Mr. Moore; and in the evening Dr. Clarke preached. The edification I have found in that connection is a powerful motive for my embracing every opportunity of attending the ministration of God in that place. In truth, my views of religion have been so much enlarged and invigorated for the last eight months, that the prior knowledge I had of it seems to me now to have been more speculative than experimental, more notional than practical.

Nov. 16, 1809.—The life of God in the soul can only be maintained by constant watchfulness; it is vain to compromise with the world; by so doing spirituality is banished. A well-grounded peace with God can only be possessed by the heart that has entirely, without any reserve, given up all to God.

The inestimable blessing of Divine illumination, the gift of the Holy Spirit, is only promised to those that seek it. Perseverance is needful;

and when the infinite value of this gift is considered, surely the soul should possess itself with patience and diligent seeking till the Divine breathing be communicated. I have always found the blessings of grace dispensed to me in proportion to my diligence in seeking them. Much profit I have found by *stated seasons* of devotion, and devotional reading. This is, indeed, great encouragement for me most diligently and importunately to seek that sense of God's pardoning mercy which shall diffuse the peace which passeth understanding. Many have sweetly experienced this, and have given proof that they have obtained it by an entire renewal of the soul; this is the lost image of God restored.

My confidence in God is greatly strengthened. The world has lost all its charms for me; and "the pearl of great price" is what I most desire to possess:—to keep my heart with all diligence, to watch the first risings of sin, and to fear the quenching of the Holy Spirit—this be now my care and business. Religion demands my time, my talents, and my affections; and I bless God I have no desire to make any reserve. I desire to be wholly the Lord's; and to prove it by holiness in all manner of conversation. I must indeed daily pray and strive against pride and warmth of temper: the first manifests itself when my favourite opinions are opposed. Here, indeed, a strict watch is necessary. I must avoid controversy in religion; and remember that acrimony and

taking offence are great proofs that piety has not its due influence on the heart.

Nov. 29, 1809.—Since my return from Margate I have made scarcely any progress in my historical reading; the bent of my taste and inclinations has been so strongly toward theology and devotional books, that I have but little relish for trifling reading. My mind is now, I think, made up as to the Scriptural nature and holy tendency of the doctrines Mr. Wesley embraced and enforced. I have been happy in the investigation; and am most firmly persuaded that his view of Christian perfection is at once the privilege and the happiness of the Christian; an eminence which it is necessary to strive and pray to obtain. It is not for us to sit down in calm indifference and wait for these influences of the Holy Spirit; this blessing is only bestowed on those who believe, and who earnestly pray and wait for this full redemption. Although I am not yet the happy possessor of it, I am greatly encouraged by that promise, Psalm cxlv, 19: "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry and will save them." I must watch and pray, and live by faith on Jesus Christ, who hath said, "Ask, and ye shall receive;" and while I do this in sincerity I shall not be confounded; for his promises are as immutable as his nature.

To-morrow there will be a *love-feast:* I am permitted to attend. There seem difficulties in the way of my joining the society, or I cer-

tainly would; I owe much to their preaching; and this is a debt I hope still to increase. There is a simplicity of mind about them of which I desire to partake; as a new-born babe to receive the sincere milk of the word that I may grow thereby.

Dec. 2, 1809.—Only blessed are they who have a *present* salvation; who with holy confidence can call God, Abba, Father: this blessed relation producing conformity to his will, and a supreme love to him and his ways.

"But while I seek and find thee not,
No peace my wandering soul shall see."

For the last week I hope I have in sincerity waited on God in prayer. I believe I have; nor can I charge myself with indifference toward him. Yet, alas! I am in bondage. Before I went to sleep one night I asked myself, "Should death present himself to me this night, have I a ground of confidence to insure my peace at the summons?" Alas! no. *Doubts* prevailed. Were I justified by faith, I feel assured that death would have no terrors in apprehension. Well, then, I must wait the coming of the Lord. Though he seem to tarry long, true and faithful is his word. Another source of grief I find in the want of spirituality of mind: when I awake in the morning my thoughts wander upon trifles—but, O! how rarely do they fix themselves on God; and rise in holy aspirations to his glorious name. Were God the supreme, the only object of my love, would not my thoughts be of him last at

night, and first in the dawn of morn? I was much comforted by a sermon of Mr. Martin's on Monday evening, on the omniscience of God. "Will God in very deed dwell with men? Behold the heaven," &c. I have suffered much from unbelief on this head. Of how many precious consolations have I been robbed by the evil suggestions, "Doth God, indeed (concerned as he is with the infinitude of his affairs,) stoop to notice my mean concerns?" Mr. M. forcibly appealed to my reason, and my religion, as to the absurdity and evil of these suggestions. God is a Spirit, and no spirit can exist without his energy; indeed, were it otherwise it would imply an imperfection in his nature. From Satan are all those dishonourable doubts which have at times but too much occupied my thoughts. In adopting the sentiments of the Wesleyans I have thought it justice to myself, and to the cause of truth, well to study, think upon, and investigate the matter: perhaps this *external* examination has been unfavourable to *internal* piety. Locke's Essay on St. Paul's Epistles has fully satisfied me of the injustice of taking detached verses or passages to build a doctrine upon; which, were the whole tenor and design of the letter or epistle taken, would have a primary and different signification. The apostle's arguments in his Epistle to the Romans are more especially respective of the Jews and Gentiles. This seems clear in reading the whole epistle at once, and by this we may ascertain the drift of his argument.

Dec. 11, 1809.—The last week I enjoyed many moments of sweet inexpressible consolation; at times I enjoyed an ejaculatory communion with God; although I have not had that distinct assurance of his pardoning love, for which I most earnestly pray; yet I cannot but receive these occasional visitations of his favour as tokens for good; that in his own time I shall experience that blissful union with him, and that ardent love to him, which I desire. O my God, have I not given myself up to thee? Is not my entire dependence on thy beloved Son, whom thou didst give a ransom for all? I desire to act constant faith on him; to give him the best, the warmest desires of my heart; to have him reign unrivalled there! Shall I seek his face in vain? No, I cannot doubt his promise, who to the present time has been so faithful. It is through his grace I am what I am; and that I can truly say, I desire God as my portion. My happiness and hopes are centred alone in him; and I long and pray to have every faculty of my soul absorbed in Divine love. This will renovate my nature, and make me grieve even at the *thought* of sinning against so much goodness. Though I outwardly check the evils of my nature, yet if they rise within, what cause of humility and of constant application to the blood of Jesus.

Dec. 13, 1809.—I believe that an habitual sense of the uncertainty of life would be the most prevailing incentive to a devotional, holy frame of mind. It was an unhallowed thought

that arose, (I checked it by the above consideration,) "Why this early strictness; you are yet young? how will you be able to maintain present views for many years?" My time is in thy hands, O God. Do I not desire thy favour as a present happiness? Do I not strive to overcome my sins that I may enjoy thee, and through thy Spirit be prepared for everlasting blessedness? And is not the delight, the sacred composure resulting from the conquest of sin, infinitely more desirable than being overcome by it?

I wish to take the WORD of God as it is: *that is faith*, to receive it with childlike simplicity; to be taught by the Spirit; this is the wisdom I ask of God. What is earthly wisdom in comparison of this? But the wisdom the Most High imparts here, he will perfect hereafter "in the floods of celestial light." Not that I decry earthly knowledge;—it is most desirable when in subserviency to religion. History and science may be consecrated at the cross; they enlarge our conception of God's dealings with the world, and of his infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, in the wonderful formation and preservation of the world, and all therein. Here we discover our slender conceptions, and our *feeble* attempts to trace the causes of the various phenomena, the effects of which so forcibly strike us. O! bend low at the footstool of the Deity; man is but a worm: if thou be a Christian, the world is a conquered enemy. Where should it lie then but at thy feet?

Dec. 20, 1809.—Daily experience convinces me how dependent I am on God for all spiritual assistance, and for the power through which I can persevere. Without *his* present help who fills heaven and earth, I sink, I die. I have power to use the means; and no blessings ever attend me without them. But the means would be no blessings were I not to seek the assistance of the Spirit of God.

Were I to read trifling books, pay trifling visits, or neglect stated seasons for devotion, my poor heart would again become the seat of earthly vanities.

Thus far I am a free agent; I can avoid the former, and can direct my attention to the latter; and by so doing I often find the blessed presence of God.

Though I am still an entire debtor to his grace, yet God works by means; and he is faithful to his promises; those that seek do find, and the bruised reed he will not break. Ungrateful should I be, after what I have experienced of God's goodness, were I to tempt him to forsake me now that my outward circumstances so much conspire to render an attendance upon him easy and delightful.

Blessed Spirit, still visit me with thy gracious influences!

Dec. 21, 1809.—I have generally returned from visiting professors of religion with great dissatisfaction. The great Redeemer, who might so justly claim the chief of their thoughts, has been the only neglected topic of conversation.

How often have I been grieved! how often attempted in vain to introduce eternal things! Not so this evening: I have returned home from Mr. S.'s with a heart more disposed for devotion, and more impressed with the love of God. The characters of two eminent servants of God, Mr. W. and Mr. Pearce, (the latter deceased,) were subjects of converse and delineation. How did my heart rejoice at the lovely accounts of Mr. W.'s family devotions and habitual fervent piety. O, may I remember the same Lord is rich unto all that call upon him. How great must have been his obstacles, and how powerful the temptation arising from his exalted station!

How inexcusable shall I be, if, amid all my advantages, I should fall short; and so, not having the Spirit of Christ, be none of his.—Arise, my soul, call upon thy God, and seek the choicest blessings of his grace.

Dec. 22, 1809.—For the last three years (since we left town) I have almost entirely neglected receiving the Lord's Supper. I believe I have suffered much loss by it; as when I did receive it I found it a very quickening means of grace: so since I ceased to enjoy this Divine ordinance, I have often been overwhelmed with lukewarmness; and, when sometimes roused to greater diligence in the pursuit of eternal things, the obstacles have been many, viz. my great distance from the Lock chapel, a prevailing dislike to the idea of joining the independent meeting, from my not being de-

cidedly a *dissenter;* and, lastly, the mode of admission to this blessed ordinance among them by a Church examination. I feel, indeed, very thankful to God, that the way is now clear before me: an unexpected door is open, and I am once again invited to the blessed feast of the Saviour's love in the Methodist chapel, where I have received so much spiritual benefit without any obstacle, either from circumstances or conscience; being near my own house, administered in the Church of England mode, which I always preferred; and my admission to his heavenly ordinance among this people is from the impression of my being a decided character. O, may I never deceive myself or others, but more "perfectly love thee, and more worthily magnify thy holy name, O Lord, for ever and ever."

How kind was the Redeemer in thus leaving a sensible memorial of his unbounded love. Remember, my soul, that this sacrament, in its spiritual extent, is a covenant by which Jesus engages to dwell in thy heart by faith; and if it be properly entered into on thy part, thou dost dedicate thy body, soul, and spirit unto the Lord; firmly purposing to devote every power and faculty to glorify thy Redeemer so long as thou hast a being.

O thou that hearest prayer, to thee I can appeal as to the sincerity of my desires of giving myself up to thee. Is it not my daily prayer to live by faith on my Redeemer? Do I not ask with importunity for the gift of thy Spirit to

enable me to perform my resolutions, to overcome every sin, and to seek for entire sanctification. When, by thy grace, I have been enabled to overcome outward temptations, yet what reason have I had to be humble for the corruptions of my nature; the risings of temper, pride, &c, which have been naked and open to Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? What reason for constant humility and application to the blood of the covenant. "*Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.*" O that these words may be engraven on the tablet of my heart: I have no time to lose; the present is all I can call my own. I must therefore labour to enter into this rest; and act constant faith on him with whom all things are possible, even my *present* sanctification. O may I examine myself strictly by the word of God, whether I be in the faith; whether the works of the Spirit be manifest; and whether God be gradually restoring my soul to his Divine image. I am not my own, but thine, blessed Lord. I have given myself up to thee; my hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, have they not their source from thy word? The world is an enemy's country; but through it I must journey to the heavenly city. O that I may keep that in sight: there will be a full compensation for all the thorns and briers, and buffetings by the way. O Lord, satisfy my soul with thy precious love; and I will welcome adversity, crosses, pains, and disappointments. Give me but faith in the unseen world, and

I will trample the present world under my feet.

Dec. 23, 1809.—I have had a most pleasing anticipation of the services of to-morrow, once again to be invited to the spiritual banquet prepared by my Saviour; once again to have those precious words addressed to me, "Take, eat: this is my body." If faith be but in exercise, shall I not be strengthened to run the race to obtain the prize? Will not my heart be more warmed, my graces more nourished, my corruptions more weakened, my hopes of assurance more heightened? If I do not receive these blessings, I must impute it to the weakness of my faith. But let me examine myself, whether my heart be fitly prepared for the reception of these Divine mysteries. What is my advancement in knowledge? Has the recollection of the sins of my early years, of the misimprovement of that light inspired into my mind at an early period; of my heart-wanderings from God after I had made an outward profession in 1803; of my careless performance of private prayer and devotional reading; of my lukewarmness and misimprovement of the ordinances of God? Have I been humbled before God, and have I sought forgiveness through Christ for these manifold transgressions? Have I bewailed these offences as committed against God's purity, and as the basest ingratitude? If I have, can I find more humility, more watchfulness, more intense desires after entire conformity to God? Lord, I have not the evidences I desire

to have; yet, blessed be thy name, I can trace earnest desires and endeavours after them; and I daily wait at thy feet for these blessings, for the fulfilment of thy promises.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God." Have I used the little imparted to me? By contemplating the unseen world, and by a lively persuasion that my only trust and hope of present and future happiness is from the Redeemer's love, I have rejoiced with joy unspeakable; sweet peace has shed its balmy influence on my heart, and I have exclaimed, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." How have I loved retirement on these occasions, and mused on the precious love of God to my soul! Surely, O Lord, it was thy Spirit working on my heart. How lovely was Christ! how hateful the appearances of evil to my soul, which at those seasons panted after thee! Were not these exercises of faith? Lord, increase my faith. Help me to be watchful against the risings of sin, and to be importunate with thee for larger degrees of *humility*. O that heavenly grace!

Jesus, my teacher, can I ever indulge high-mindedness, self-love, and vain conceit? I shall have strangely forgotten thee as my pattern, who wast meek and lowly of heart, if these detestable evils again reign in my heart. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Do I love the image of Christ wherever I behold it reflected in any of his members?

Can I esteem *grace* though in *poverty?* Do I behave with Christian humility to all who love the Saviour, and strive to promote their interests as far as I have ability? In this I do rejoice, and humbly hope I may add an affirmative to each of these queries. Lord, increase my love of them and thee.

Is my obedience to Christ constrained; or does it proceed from love and entire willingness to be his in body, soul, and spirit? Blessed Saviour, can I contemplate thy life, death, and sufferings, and be insensible to the amazing sacrifice, the astonishing love which could induce thee to leave the realms of uncreated blessedness, that thy creature, man, might be reconciled to an offended God? Didst thou offer thyself a voluntary sacrifice for my sins, and can I *hesitate* whether I shall give up all to *thee?* Impossible—poor, indeed, is the return—yet, as thou art supremely lovely in my esteem, I wish to make no reserve, but to dedicate all my powers to thee, and have all my desires centre in thee; nothing but thy love can satisfy my soul. O be present with me when I bow before thy altar, and partake of the broken bread, emblem of that precious body which was broken on the cross; and drink of that wine, commemorative of thy most precious blood, which flowed for the salvation of thy guilty creatures. I am very weak and helpless, but thou art strong and mighty. I want heavenly wisdom, that I may understand the heights and depths of redeeming love. I want

to love the Lord with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength; and to love my neighbour as myself. Thou alone canst make me a partaker of these amazing blessings. O may I not ask amiss, but receive of thee grace, constantly to seek thy favour and live upon thy revealed word.

Dec. 25, 1809.—Yesterday I heard Mr. Benson preach three times: it was the most delightful Sabbath I ever spent. His sermon in the morning was from John i, 12. In elucidating the beginning of that chapter, I was surprised and delighted with his clear views of the Trinity; a subject on which, I had previously understood, he excelled. In the first head of his discourse he showed what was meant by receiving Christ, accepting him *alone* as a teacher, trusting him as a Mediator, loving him as the only Redeemer, and acknowledging him as our Governor; he being the author of eternal salvation, *only to those who obey him.*

I was enabled, I trust, through the Spirit's influence, to believe *my* interest in him. I could no longer withstand; but in my heart said, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." How sweetly did he expatiate upon the privileges of God's children! How did he unfold the blessed effects of that holy relationship, and urge us yet to press forward and seek after an entire conformity to the image of God.

In the afternoon he preached from 1 Tim. i, 15; in the evening from 1 John iii, 8. The Lord's Supper was not administered till to-day

by Mr. Martin. Surely this is a day which I shall have in everlasting remembrance. I found the chapel to be none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven; surely I was enabled *to feed upon Christ in my heart by faith, with thanksgiving.* I bless and praise thee, my Redeemer, for thy presence manifested to me this day. By faith have I entered the manger where the blessed Jesus condescended to make his appearance; doing honour to our nature in veiling his Godhead in our humanity. O, I left my burden in the manger! my faith kindled at the sight; he is my bright and morning star; and while he sheds the Divine radiance on my soul, I am supremely happy. Perhaps thou hast sent me this as a cordial; as a preparative for trials: O Lord, I want a faith that will overcome all difficulty, all opposition, and all discouragement. I want a faith operating on every power of my soul; I want to be subdued entirely to thy grace, and know no will but thine. O Lord, while I am seeking strength from thee, and acting faith upon thee, I shall not grieve thee by separating from thy mild and lovely government: but O, leave me not to myself; for, separate from thee I fall: separate from thee I only know disquietude, and am left to the darkness and ignorance of my own mind.

This day I have again sealed the covenant; I have enlisted under the banners of the cross, and am no longer my own but his; bought with the price of the Redeemer's blood. How

powerful are my motives for persevering! What! shall I forsake the fountain of living waters, the streams of which have gladdened my heart, and introduced a taste of heaven? Shall I ever again try the world—that deceiver? Shall I, with eternity before me; I, who can only insure the present *now*, shall I again run the risk of losing my title to immortality, by indulging lukewarmness and indifference; by trifling or misimproving the time given me for so important a work?——

O Lord, I beseech thee, be thou my helper, keep thy abode in my heart; and let me experience more and more, the love, the joy, the peace of believing. In proportion as I do this, shall I disdain the poor offerings of this vain world, and see the inadequacy of human knowledge for immortal powers; as also the danger, the misery of allowing the heart to be divided, of making a truce with the world, which was always God's enemy; and therefore is and ought to be mine. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and *never forget* this day's benefits."

Dec. 29, 1809.—I have, with little intermission, enjoyed the manifestation of God's love in my soul the past week: in one instance I grieved the Spirit of God. O, what sensations of anguish did it occasion me? by earnest prayer I was restored to peace before night. From this I learn the necessity of being continually watchful: to be overcome by sin, what bitterness does it occasion? how are evidences clouded? how does the soul recoil at the idea,

that the Son of God is thereby crucified afresh? what carefulness has it wrought in me ever since; how importunate was I the following morning for God's grace to keep me from the approach of evil. In tender mercy he has heard my prayer: I feel convinced that *sin* must be a strange work to the believer: it is incompatible with the indwelling of the Spirit of God: I long to feel deeper the Spirit's influence: I want to be filled with that holy love which shall make me s creasingly superior to the allurements of ense, which shall make my affections spiritual, and keep me aspiring after entire subordination and love to God; so that heaven, begun below, may be my happy portion. O I have felt the joy arising from *a sense of pardon*; may I never forfeit it by sinning against the God of all goodness, who, in so much mercy, answered my prayers. My faith is, alas! very weak. O may I more fully comprehend the large extent of that salvation Christ came to bestow, even a deliverance from the power of all sin; a vital and mysterious union of the soul with himself; that "white stone which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it."

On entering into a solemn covenant with God at the commencement of the new year, she makes the following remarks and resolutions:—

Jan. 7, 1810.—I have this day added to my obligations of living only and closely to God. I have entered into a public and solemn

covenant with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to give up my body, soul, and spirit, all I have and all I am, to him, as a most reasonable service. God is my witness, that my heart is sincere in this self-dedication; that I choose Christ with his yoke, his *cross* and his *crown*, in preference to the world, its *wealth*, its *pleasures*, and its *curse*. Things temporal are but as a shadow; things which are eternal are substantial. O my God, thy eye-lids try the children of men; thou hast witnessed and ratified in heaven that most solemn renunciation which I have made of sin and self; I have given myself up to thee as thy servant.—Choose thou for me my future portion; be my inheritance. O blissful thought! The eternal God, who by a word spake all creation into existence, who was from everlasting to everlasting, even he whose existence is so incomprehensible, has promised to take up his abode in the contrite heart. This is his revelation; the world by wisdom knew it not: it was a stretch too vast for human thought, that He whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, should thus condescend to visit every heart that will make him room. O fill my soul with thy love, and heaven shall commence there. O that I may daily take up my cross and follow thee; be under the teachings of thy Spirit; and never, *never* grieve him, but be more and more assimilated to the image of God; possessing that inward and outward holiness without which the gates of heaven will be closed to me.—

Hence may I learn that as the present moment is all I can insure, so constant and present living on Christ is my duty and privilege: and to depend on that grace which he has said shall be sufficient. This is living by faith; this is the life I desire to live; and if there be any secret sin which rises up in opposition, Holy Spirit, convince me of it; and let me not rest satisfied, be it a right arm or a right eye, till it is cut off or plucked out!—Help me diligently to use all the means of grace thou hast prescribed, for the utter destruction of all my corruptions; and to watch against all temptations, particularly those of *prosperity*. That is a hard trial to a Christian, it being but rarely his element in this world.—Thy holy word I take to be the rule of my life; to thy yoke I submit.

O be thou my teacher and my instructer in meekness and lowliness of heart; in purity of intention, in habitual devotion of mind, in a holy superiority to the allurements of sense and the fascinations of pleasure! O give me that living water that I may never thirst; and let it spring up within me unto everlasting life!—Amen and Amen. MARY HANSON.

Jan. 11, 1810.—I have enjoyed much of the Divine presence this day; my soul has been filled with love and peace.

> "Renounce all strength but strength Divine,
> And peace shall be for ever mine."

By simply believing and looking unto Jesus are received all those Divine blessings which

cause the enraptured soul to say, "My Father, my God, and my friend." God is indeed faithful to his promises: when I seek his face and his favour with sincerity, when I desire it as my chief good, then he, by his Spirit, manifests himself, gives me power over sin, and imparts a peace which passeth understanding. I am jealous of any interruption to these sublime emotions; his presence who fills heaven and earth alone, satisfies my soul; I desire no other company. This peace can only be maintained by conquest over sin. And O! how impossible while under these sacred influences, to be ruffled by passion, or overcome by pride. Clouds may succeed this sunshine. O my God, prepare me for *thy will*, for I have given up *my own*. Prepare me for temptation and suffering; may I be strengthened by these proofs of thy paternal care, and take up my cross and follow thee daily.

Jan. 22, 1810.—When the soul is impressed with a sense of the Divine presence and love, the world in vain attempts to seduce; feeling its celestial origin and destination, the soul leaves sensible objects and soars to the pure fountain of life and happiness.

O my God, I acknowledge thy goodness to the present moment; the last week I was in London, a place of all others I had before found unfavourable for meditation; and yet, glory to thy name, thou wast there present to my soul; thou art

"In the void waste as in the city full,"

I have returned to my loved closet, strengthened and animated to run with vigour the race set before me. O thou best of beings; one ray of thy benignity can impart the most solid and exquisite delight; in the contemplation of thee how does my soul expand! How does it long to possess the fruition of thy grace and glory! It is then I feel fettered by mortality. O may I drink deeper into these holy mysteries, and feel more powerfully that thy Spirit is within me; that my life is hid with Christ in God.

O Saviour of mankind, how inadequate is a life, an eternity of praise, to show forth thy love to my poor soul. O may my short life be a life of obedience!

Jan. 23, 1810.—It is with peculiar gratitude I record that the last months of the past year have been in a spiritual sense the best of my life; God has been faithful to his word; shall I ever forsake him and grieve his Spirit by lukewarmness? *Unless I persevere in fervent prayer, in devotional retirement, and constant watchfulness,* the ensnaring world, and my more ensnaring heart, will gain the victory; and heaven and eternity will be but rarely contemplated. O my God, save me from this! never can I know true peace independent of thee; O enable me to prefer thee to all the world beside; and to exercise a never-failing trust in thy providence! O my heavenly Father! let me henceforth depend supremely on thy parental care; and seek no other guide than thy holy word. May a more entire happiness in thee be

the supreme object of my hopes. Whatever may be the result of the year I am now entering upon, with regard to temporal concerns, may my soul but enjoy the presence of God, and all will be well. I wish more powerfully to feel the necessity of constantly seeking the influence of the Holy Spirit, to renovate my nature, to baptize me afresh; these are evidences of a state of acceptance with God. Christ was manifested to destroy sin; and if he has been and is manifested to my soul, sin will be destroyed, viz. its *reigning and allowed powers.* I must be meek and lowly, humble and teachable; these are lessons none can effectually teach me but the Spirit, and he can; and will, if I act faith on the promises, and be not satisfied till they are fulfilled.

Jan. 24, 1810.—All things are possible to them that believe; even entire sanctification.—Am I advancing in holiness? Alas! worldly thoughts occupy too large a share of every day; thoughts which, if not immediately worldly, yet tend to no good; vague and wandering. When I should be enjoying God, perhaps I am indulging self-conceit, or supposed superiority of mind. "How long shall vain thoughts lodge within me." Cleanse thou the thoughts of my heart by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit; all evil is first engendered in the heart; God looks to the heart; the law, the Gospel law, extends to the thoughts of the heart: if the fountain be pure the streams cannot be corrupt. May I keep my heart with all diligence, and be impor-

tunate with God to sanctify me wholly. Here is indeed cause for humility, but none for despair. Though my thoughts have been vain, blessed be God who heareth prayer, he hath not suffered me, through their influence, to commit actual and known sin. I must guard against judging too much of my state from such frames and feelings; these are often affected by various physical causes; my judgment of myself must proceed from the prevailing practical desires of living near to God, and obeying him; and I know that I shall be happy in proportion as these are lively and strong; the Divine communication will be opened, and prayer be the ladder by which I shall step from earth to heaven. These are the blessed realities of religion; the more they are sought the more largely will they be dispensed. The most effectual antidote to worldly thoughts and vain desires is the consideration of the omnipresence of God. Alas! I have thought too little of this, and also of the future judgment. For an habitual reflection on these I must daily petition the Father of mercies; believing he will accomplish every thing asked in faith according to his word.

I am sensible I do not redeem time as I ought to do; my plans are too lax, too much under the influence of passing accidents; in work I loiter, and in visiting the poor am not sufficiently strenuous in spiritual things, nor active enough in my exertions; this, with the help of God, I hope to amend, and to attain to

greater diligence in business and fervency of spirit—serving the Lord.

Hammersmith, Jan. 27, 1810.—Eternity alone can develope the full extent of the Redeemer's love. When we there behold him in the splendour of his Godhead, surrounded by angels and archangels, and the spirits of the just made perfect; when we contrast his glory with his humiliation, and ourselves have attained the crown of eternal felicity; then, with an emphasis Heaven alone can inspire, shall we exclaim, Worthy is the Lamb!

Jesus, mindful of the weakness of human nature, though on the point of his extreme sufferings, left a sensible commemoration of his love, by which an appeal is made to sense and faith in those symbols of his death. O my soul, think a little of this sacrifice. Now the application of it will redeem thee from the power of death, hell, and the grave. And what return canst thou make? Nothing adequate to his gift. But what does he require? "My heart." O may it be my delight to consecrate every thing to him; and while by faith I see him stretched on the cross, may I powerfully feel the dreadful nature and tendency of *sin*. If I love him I shall consider every sin as again inflicting the wounds of Calvary. He died that the lost image of God might be restored in man; that by the sanctification of the Spirit man might be fitted for the realms of purity.

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God," I am

transported with thy love! Nothing but thee will content my soul. To partake of the precious memorials of thy love is all my heart desires. O be present with the influence of thy Spirit, and let me approach thy altar with my faith firmly fixed on Him, who bled that I might never die.

I desire to be filled with love, and lie prostrate in the dust at the consideration of my own unworthiness.

I want my repentance deepened, my faith confirmed, my love inflamed. Thou only art sufficient for these things.

Feb. 20, 1810.—I was both encouraged and instructed by a sermon Mr. Martin preached last evening from Matt. ix, 29: "According to your faith be it unto you."

In speaking of the nature and effects of faith, he made the remark, which confirmed an opinion I have long held, that "faith is the standard of our experience." The man who believes it to be impossible that he can have a knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, never attains it—he cannot—because blessings are imparted only "according to what he believes." In like manner those who believe the man of sin can never be destroyed will never attain to this blessing. Faith, that Divine and operative power, prevails with God. He must impart that which he has promised; and he has promised all needful things. Only believe, know, and live up to the privileges of the Gospel, and what a glorious prospect opens upon the Christian!

May I but exercise more and more this Divine principle! Lord, increase my faith; and may an eye steadily fixed on thy power, bring down upon my soul thy promised blessings.

This day (Feb. 20,) I attended a Methodist class meeting for the first time; and was much pleased with the earnestness and simplicity of the people. Their several accounts of God's dealings with their souls were plain and Scriptural; and I do think those meetings exceedingly well calculated to maintain holiness, and promote it in the heart. The downcast is encouraged by the happy state of another soul; and by the judicious advice of the leader each receives encouragement.

O for simplicity of heart to receive the kingdom of God as a little child! Away with cavillings and skeptical reasonings. When did these ever produce joy and peace in believing? *Experimental* religion is not a subject which a natural man can reason upon; it is to him foolishness; it can only be spiritually discerned. O may the religion I profess be a well of water springing up within me! A holy principle, producing joy and peace; a principle which shall make me soar above the world, feel the Divine origin of my soul, and be constantly tending toward the source of all true felicity.

Feb. 27, 1810.—I find more and more that my happiness is inseparable from religion. If I pass but a short time without thinking of God, and during that time am full of hilarity, and perhaps of thoughtlessness, how does it pierce

my soul to think God was not in all my thoughts? The nearer I live to him, the more superior I become to the fascinations of the world. This is a Divine lesson: I want habitually to practise it. Reading that has no reference to God I find no delight in. My soul has now an appetite for spiritual food; it must have daily satisfaction in the contemplation of the Deity, and of his dealings in various ways with the souls of men. It is a pleasing evidence to my mind that my taste, pursuits, and sentiments, are so opposite to what they were. That which was formerly a *task* is now a delight; and that which was once my pleasure, and pursued with an unwarrantable avidity, delights me no more. The more frequent and serious my meditations are on eternity, the more powerfully am I convinced of the rationality of devoting most of my time to the study of spiritual subjects. Wisdom which is from above will survive the conflagration of the universe; and will attain its maturity where faith is lost in sight. The study of nature I much delight in: while it delights it edifies: it exalts one's conceptions of the Deity, and discovers to us the design and harmony of these his lowest works. I purpose trying again my favourite chemistry, and to gain some tolerable theoretic knowledge of it, being denied the practical part. Whatever tends to alienate my affections from God I would avoid. He is the Father of lights; and if he but illuminate my understanding, and impart his blessed presence

to my soul, and give me more and deeper views of my own nature and need of his glorious excellence and fulness ; I desire no more. I will contentedly sojourn here below, and meet all his dispensations with a calmness he will impart.

Fast Day, Feb. 28, 1810.—I consider a day set apart for public humiliation a privilege ; and although there are thousands in this land who wholly disregard it, (and perhaps some of these are among the first to institute it,) yet to such as have spiritual discernment, who know and feel the heinous nature of sin, who have studied the histories of other countries, marked their rise and fall, traced the progress of that luxury and abandonment of public morals which at length brought down the just and merited judgment of God ; persons of this character justly fear for their own land, and at these seasons humble themselves not only for their own sins, but for those of their guilty country.—My private judgment is, that a fast is not properly observed unless there be an entire, not partial abstinence from ordinary food. Not that the act, independent of the principle, will be regarded by God : this is fully evinced in Isaiah lviii. But when the body is humbled the soul is more alive to painful subjects, acts more independently of it, and faith and love are winged. By abstaining from customary enjoyments, we learn more sensibly to appreciate our dependence on God, and to evince gratitude to him for common blessings. Alas ! how many are deprived of these.

I have this day felt intense desires after conformity to God; to have his blessed image stamped on my soul, the kingdom of God within me; and were my faith greater, more habitual, I should be much nearer the glorious pentecost. It has been experienced by numbers; and why should I despair? I find, upon examining my heart, a great deal of self-will, pride, and worldly-mindedness, unsubdued: but I will not rest till these enemies to my Lord are crucified. I have again renewed my covenant with God, devoting body, soul, and spirit, to his service; resolving by his grace to go on from strength to strength, bearing my cross, suffering his will, till meetened for heaven. Endeavouring more habitually "to keep the end in view," that solemn account I must render to my God when earth and all therein shall be burnt up.

If no obstacle arise, I hope to meet in Mr. P.'s class to-morrow evening. I need every help, every encouragement; and to unite myself with the people of God will, I hope, through the Divine blessing, be a means of accelerating my progress toward heavenly enjoyment. As little as possible will I have to do with that bane of piety—lukewarm professors, worldly saints.

It is now ten months since I was induced to hear the Methodists, and examine their principles. My good opinion of them has increased in proportion to my inquiry. I have found real piety among them; the true enjoyment of religion; and, according to my judgment, the

right apprehension of God's word. When they speak for themselves I agree with them on every point. My desire is to live and die with them; and, if it were God's will, never to remove out of their connection. At present I can only partially attend the chapel. I think it the most apostolic Church now in existence. The government I much approve of; and as to the local preachers my prejudices have ceased. I have derived more benefit from their plain experimental sermons, than from any of merely school-taught divines. They are too useful to be rejected, too pious not to edify the *humble* followers of Jesus: I have long had the form of religion, but now I earnestly desire to feel its power;—to delight, as far as my poor ability lies, to go about doing good.

March 19, 1810.—Sunday was the day for the society to receive their tickets. With much fear and trembling, I stopped, and received, with six others, admission tickets into the Methodist society.

It was Mr. Fish who gave her the admission ticket, on March 18th; and in a day or two afterward Mr. Moore sent her a regular society ticket: on the back of which she herself has written, "Happy in God and in possession of the peace which passeth understanding."

March 24, 1810.—Since Monday I have enjoyed uncommon peace of mind; at times great joy in believing: not one wish have I had

to draw back from the society; but many pleasing thoughts in having so decidedly entered into such solemn engagements to serve my God. I went to class, and found it very profitable; I was enabled to speak with more confidence than I ever expected of God's goodness to my soul. O that it may be a means of kindling the Divine spark into a holy flame; that all my powers may burn with love to that gracious Being, who has so mercifully inclined his ear to me. I have had the past week *a full conviction of my acceptance with God.* Unspeakable privilege! His commandments are my delight; his will my happiness. O for more acquaintance with it.

March 30, 1810.—For the last week I have found the blessedness of serving God; of aspiring after more acquaintance with him as the God of nature, providence, and grace. I have had much peace; but, O how much do I find the means and the end connected. When I seek him with my whole heart, and resign myself and all my concerns into his hands, his blessing accompanies it: the witness of the Spirit that I am accepted through the Beloved. True religion has a blessed reward connected with it; and self-denial brings a present satisfaction. To maintain this, prayer and watchfulness must be without ceasing; and there must be strivings against the obtrusive infirmities of nature, and the temptations which varying circumstances may produce. Stated seasons of prayer and reading must be rigorously

attended to, in spite of dulness and sloth. Where the warfare, if religion had always delight connected with its requirements? It is a state of trial; a life of faith: and to him that *overcometh* is the crown of glory promised.

I enjoyed, exceedingly, Mr. Moore's preaching, three times on Sunday. In the afternoon he descanted sweetly on the love of God.—"We love him, because he first loved us." Revelation, reason, and experience, all testify, that in proportion as we love him, and admire his excellencies, in that proportion shall we do his will and delight in his commandments. In the evening Mr. M. preached from Job xxii, 21, "Acquaint now thyself with him and be at peace." It was a most able discourse; and he powerfully showed the unattainableness of *peace*, independent of an acquaintance with God: such a knowledge as rectifies the heart, and transforms it into his image. I found a great blessing in all the services. The society stopped after the evening service, and were sweetly exhorted to unity, steadfastness, and growing piety among themselves.

On Monday I spent an hour or two with Mr. Moore, at Mr. B.'s; I much enjoyed his conversation: he is a man of true wisdom—every word has weight. He cleared up some difficult passages of Scripture, entirely to my satisfaction. He has kindly invited me to go and see him; and I much hope an opportunity will offer itself. He also promised to introduce me to that eminent saint, Lady Mary

Fitzgerald; I should like indeed to draw the spirit of Canaan from her lips. Before we parted, Mr. M. prayed most affectionately for me. In the evening he preached from Hebrews vi, 1. "Therefore, leaving the principles, &c, let us go on unto perfection." A most delighful sermon, on that controverted subject. True ardent love to God and man, producing obedience to the Divine will, is the summary of the perfection he and all of them preach. He told me I had put the sermon into his head by repeating that verse in the morning. I am thankful for it, as it tended to confirm me more in that blessed doctrine. How increasing are my obligations to love and serve thee, thou Lord of heaven! How continually does the manna of thy love drop around my tent! Encompassed by thy mercies, O may every day find me pressing after more and deeper acquaintance with Thee, who fillest all in all.

And, O may the love thou hast imparted to my soul break forth in acts of love and benevolence to all around me, so that the talent thou hast imparted may be improved, and I may render up my account with joy.

April 9, 1810.—Clouds occasionally obscure the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness on my soul; but, blessed be God, under these clouds my confidence in his mercy and favour toward me is unchanged. I do not always equally rejoiče, but I can trust. Against corruptions, temptations, and infirmities, I know I

shall have to combat: a crown of glory is worth every effort. I find my desires after God increase; I want more knowledge, faith, and love; nor will I rest satisfied till I am set free from sin. I feel jealous of every thing that draws my heart from this object. O God! satisfy my desires. I much enjoyed the services of yesterday; the preacher was Mr. Reece, from the East London circuit, a man of very lively talents, original, and awakening. The "burning bush," Exodus iii, was the morning subject. He took a general and very edifying view of the Church, from that period to the present. A love-feast was held after the evening service: a more rational and Scriptural account of God's dealings with the souls of those who spoke, could not, I think, be given. I had much reason to rejoice with them all: God is with them of a truth. O, that that place may be *filled* with such humble, holy worshippers. I heard much to encourage me as an individual. Religion in this circuit, from Mr. R.'s account, is in a very flourishing and reviving state. Two hundred new members have been added since the last conference.

April 23, 1810.—In being myself raised to newness of life, I find the most conclusive, satisfactory evidence I can have of Christ's resurrection. My desires and endeavours after this, blessed be God, do increase. For this, God endued me with a rational existence: for this, Christ willingly shed his precious blood. O glorious hope! full of immortality. There

are seasons when I can rise above the transitory things of life; and by faith pierce the veil which so long hid "my Lord from my eyes." I can now see God every where, and in every thing; and at times have transporting views of his greatness, wisdom, and love. O why did I so long live at a distance from my God; from the only source of rest and calm repose? Why did I ever attempt a compromise with the world; *his* enemy? I became untrue to my heavenly Spouse; counted his service an unnecessary strictness. Glory be to the whole Trinity, that all have conspired to deliver me from this darkness; and that every day I feel a willing necessity to love God, and give up all to him; satisfied of his faithfulness, that if I am but true to the grace he imparts he will give more and more; and that from being a babe, I shall become strong in Christ Jesus, being rooted and grounded in love. *Faith is a continual act;* that which was imparted the last hour is not sufficient for the present:—but God is all-sufficient, and all his glorious attributes unite in my behalf to ensure the continuance of his favour while I wait for him in the appointed way. "*To love God;*" blessed privilege! angels never knew such a cause; it was left for *man* to attain the heights and depths of redeeming love.

I was much encouraged by a sermon of Mr. Moore's last evening, from Rom. vi, 4. I left the sanctuary rejoicing, and in my closet had sweet intercourse with God. While I was a lukewarm professor I passed on very quietly

without opposition: but now I find my increasing earnestness produces many remarks; and if I go on to walk in newness of life, I find that not even my professing friends will be silent. At these things I am not affrighted; only I must be very cautious not to be buffetted for faults; not to suffer spiritual duties to interfere with my other daily avocations. For this end, I must redeem my time; and instead of rising at six as I do now, rise an hour earlier; and particularly be *diligent* when at business. God forbid I should ever bring any just reproach on religion; rather may I adorn by a meek and lowly conversation, that Divine cause my whole heart is now engaged in. I have been much interested by reading again Paley's Natural Theology, and Derham's Physico-Theology.—This is my favourite amusement; it leads me to God, and my eyes become the medium of instruction.

April 28, 1810.—For the two past days I have enjoyed the peace which passeth understanding.

"Not a cloud did arise,
To darken the skies,
Or to hide for a moment my Lord from my eyes."

The inward witness of Christianity is, to the believer who experiences it, an unanswerable proof of its divinity. While this pervades the soul, (and the fault is in myself if it do not always,) how lovely are Divine requisitions! Self-denial has its joys, and the cross has a sweetness which divests it of its name. I feel my nature so

renewed, so transformed from what it was, that while I constantly feel, "O to grace how great a debtor," I am constrained humbly to hope, and humbly believe, that God is my Father and views me with love. Amazing privilege! When I contemplate his glories in nature, in this beauteous globe; when my heart vibrates with gratitude for the love with which his Spirit has inspired me. O when I can call him mine, and know that all his glorious attributes conspire to ensure my confidence in him! That *all*, while I walk in obedience to him, proclaim peace to my soul.

I find the blessed effect of renewing my covenant with God every morning. I can set to my seal that God is true: he is unchangeable; and should a distance ever grow between us the fault will be in me. Bitter work for repentance indeed. Why should I injure my own peace by ever allowing indifference toward so glorious an object to obtrude on my soul. Forbid it, gracious God. Let the love I now feel toward thee every day increase. May I never be satisfied without progress in the knowledge of thee. Last evening I bade farewell for a few weeks to my good old women; and I found considerable delight in offering up prayer to God for them, to keep and support them till we meet again. I visited those on my poor list: I hope God has begun a good work in two of them; but what a veil of ignorance is there to remove from the hearts of those who have passed forty or sixty years in ignorance of

God; his Spirit alone can effect it. I have read and talked to them: prayed with and for them. O that God may give an increase! I am at times almost overwhelmed with the state of those who are dead in sin; the awful precipice on which they so heedlessly stand. Fain would I give up myself to do all my little ability can, to warn and allure them to flee from the wrath to come.

May 13, 1810.—My going to town has been postponed till next week, on account of my brother's illness. I continue to enjoy some of the blessed effects of religion: they are to me paths of pleasantness; and whenever I grieve it is because my heart at times is not *intense* upon the great object of having a constant communication open between heaven and my soul. But I cannot rest without a large increase of my present attainments. I have but just passed the threshold of religion; I want to advance till I am filled with all the fulness of God.

In this place, on the back of her second society ticket, June, 1810, she writes,—"In London when received: my mind in a calm, settled frame;—increasing desires of entire devotedness to God."

July 8, 1810.—After having been nearly six weeks in London I am returned, I hope and believe, with new and increasing desires to love and serve God with all my heart and soul.

My heart is fixed; O God! my heart is fixed to be *in* Christ; to walk in him, to have the

indwelling of the holy Trinity. O for that measure of this incomprehensible mystery which shall produce in me more ardent love, lively hope, and active obedience. Religion has heights and depths I long to experience. O for a soul on fire for these blessings. They are offered to me: I will not rest till I attain larger measures of them. Let me not rest satisfied with mere desires; but let me by my importunity prevail. Lord, increase the measure of my faith; let me feel myself nothing, and thou my all.

I am increasingly sensible that religion is only so far a source of peace and happiness as it infuses itself into the mind, and becomes there the prevailing and active principle: indifference is a death blow to it. God wisely withholds his choice blessings from those who do not seek them with their whole hearts. Who that has felt the real nature of religion in the soul, as a source of peace and renovation, can ever find the paltry enjoyments of this world worth seeking after?

The following letter shows her views of the religious society with whom she had lately joined, with answers to some objections of her pious correspondent:—

Lower Mall, March 30, 1810.

My Dear Friend,—

* * * * * * * * *

Your last letter, my dearest friend, so long in coming, marks me out rather a more controver-

sial course than I am disposed to take. Independent of the true affection we have borne each other, I should not particularly object to a paper controversy with you, as I believe you to be more candid and reasonable than the generality of those who are of your sentiments. But we are friends, nor do either of us wish to feel less attachment. I believe not—but rather to have it on the increase. We must not close our eyes to the many sad examples of Christians losing for a while their charity; who, instead of loving their enemies, have hated the friends of Christ who differed from them in some points of doctrine. Let us avoid approaching the rock on which many, more stable than ourselves, have split. That the doctrines of the Wesleyans are those of the Bible, I am more and more convinced: and after an examination of them for twelve months, and of the discipline and people, I have the pleasure of telling you I have joined the society. To keep me from it I have had every *earthly* motive; to unite me to it, every *spiritual* one.

When we see each other, Mary Ann, I will, if you desire it, enter fully into the points wherein we differ; for your present satisfaction I will, however, answer your questions. Had you been acquainted with the sentiments of that great and good man, Mr. Wesley, you would not have asked them. You ask me, "If I place any dependence on my own performances, as being at all able to recommend me to the favour of God?" Not in the least,—justified

freely by his grace, I must come just as I am, poor, blind, and naked, or he will never receive me :—but, observe,—I believe that sanctification follows ; "the tree is known by its fruit." "If a man love me, he will keep my commandments." Faith works by love ; this is the wedding garment. By the fruits of faith I believe you and I shall be judged at the last day. Read Matthew, chap. xxv. There is no *merit* in all this. We are first justified by the righteousness of another, and all the good we do is owing to the influence of the Spirit freely offered and received, but which we might have grieved, and quenched, and resisted. As to your second question, "Whether God can regard you with fatherly affection to-day, and the next cast you from him?" I answer, The decrees of God respect men as believers and unbelievers ; the righteous shall be saved and the wicked condemned, whoever they be. These are the sovereign decrees : but as it respects individuals, personally considered, there is this condition implied ; such persons must become righteous, continue in righteousness, (by the grace of God,) or if they fall from it, return again in order to be saved. But as God is unchangeable, and doth not love and again hate the same person while he continues in the same state, but as he is found doing his will or the contrary ; so he loves and blesses the righteous, and hates all workers of iniquity. Should *we* change a thousand times from bad to good, God is the same in his love to us, or the contrary, as

we are found doing or not doing that which he requires of us. While we continue in the grace of God freely imparted, watching and praying, loving God with all our hearts, none shall pluck us out of the Redeemer's hands ; nothing shall separate us from his love : but if we grow careless, neglectful of prayer and reading the word of God ; count his service weariness, and hold communion with the world instead of the Creator, can you think such persons meet for the kingdom of heaven? These instances, my dearest friend, are not uncommon. I do believe that if you and I have once received the grace of God, it is our own fault, and chargeable alone upon ourselves, that we ever lose it. God deals with us as with reasonable creatures; and certain conditions are prescribed to us. We are to ask, seek, and knock for the Holy Spirit : having received it, we are to *watch* and pray ; deny ourselves, abstain from all appearance of evil : the power is from above ; and through Christ we can do all these things. I have said three times as much as I intended ; forgive me, my friend.

Through the Divine influence, I enjoy, with little interruption, great peace of mind,—I never was so truly happy. I feel that I love God, his ways, and his will ; and my happiest moments are employed in imploring his continual aid, and holding communion with him : indeed, my dear friend, I find the advantage of associating but little with that bane of piety, lukewarm professors. The true spirit of religion

I find diffused among our society; a nonconformity to the world and a loving spirit among its members, helping each other in the paths of religion; just what I needed to quicken my poor dead soul, sunk as it was in spiritual sloth, and destitute of that sacred peace the Spirit has promised to bestow. Well, dearest Mary Ann, do not let these sentiments and enjoyments, if contrary to your own, diminish the love you have borne me; mine for you glows with the same fervour; and I shall have just reason to reproach myself if I suffer the entrance of indifference. *All* will meet in heaven who love God, by whatever name they are called: the more we get of this Divine principle, the more we shall love each other. O! how altogether supernatural is the life of God in the soul: how utterly incapable are we of ourselves to maintain it one instant. As our wants are momentary, so must our supplies be. Blessed be God, for all this is promised!

My dear friend, I long to see you, and shall be impatient till I hear from you.

My garden begins to demand my renewed labours. When will you inhale the fragrance of my roses, and help me to admire the kindness of our God in providing so much innocent pleasure for the delight of the senses? The study of nature is still my favourite recreation; but to increase in the love and knowledge of God almost swallows up every other desire; and no reading but what tends to it satisfies me.—Brother William and I have entered into an

engagement to rise at six every morning, or forfeit one shilling; the fruit of our laziness to be put into a poor box, of which I have the disposal.

Adieu, my dear friend; be assured you are very near the heart of

Your most affectionate

MARY ———.

June 14, 1810.

MY DEAR MARY ANN,—I believe I never before this time have had to plead an excuse for silence or neglect; nor, truly, have I ever been so little mistress of my own time as during the last two months: this alone is my apology.

And now, my dear friend, I have to answer your two kind letters—When shall we meet? such frequent disappointment will make me reluctant again to indulge the anticipation of so pleasing an event. In the midst of your many sorrows, O cleave closely to your heavenly Father, who will sustain you if you roll your burden upon him. I know of no source of comfort but religion; and all it affords is yours, if you will but by faith make it so. To those who love and fear God afflictions are blessings; I believe they are sent in mercy to all. How does the chastening hand of God tend to produce self-examination, and a thirsting after happiness which outlives the mutability of earthly things! it is then we *feel* the world to be vain, and totally incapable to afford a resting place for the mind.

My dearest friend, let neither of us be satisfied without making continual advances in the Divine life; let us not rest till we have the constant inhabitation of the holy Trinity in our souls: you know this is promised to all that love Christ and keep his words: for this I feel athirst. What then is all the tribulation of the world if Divine peace have taken possession of our minds. The world is such a vapour; a bubble! the props of our earthly dependence are so frequently taken from us, and so justly too, (that we may only lean upon Omnipotency,) that present things are hardly worth a serious thought.

I often think the whole of religion is comprised in the word *love;* the only taste we can have of heaven below is when our hearts are filled with this Divine principle. God is love, heaven is love: may our desires and conceptions of this be enlarged!

During my visit in London, I enjoyed many religious advantages: there I have become acquainted with some charming and exemplary women in our society. Indeed, there is that uncommon primitive union among them, that to know one is, if you please, to know all: true Christian friendship is in delightful exercise. The uncommon activity which these sisters of mine manifest in their daily walk to do good both to the souls and bodies of their needy fellow creatures will, I hope, prove a stimulant to me to go and do likewise. Our blessed Lord sets us an example that we should follow

his steps. Yours in the truest bonds of Christian friendship, MARY ———.

DIARY.

July 23, 1810.—To live under the Divine influence, to be casting every care upon my almighty Guardian, to trust him in every difficulty, is happiness, is safety. To record *all* his goodness would require the burning love of a seraph; for O his love is manifested every hour of my life: and that I feel no more of intensity of affection in return, is my grief.

Divine Spirit! fill me with love, empty me of self; bring every power, every faculty into subjection to thy will; and the glory and praise shall be ascribed to thee for ever.

I have made a fresh surrender of myself to thee this day, O God. I am not my own but thine! and I desire to act and live as becomes one who is a temple of the living God; to be ever mindful that *thou* seest me; to watch the motives of my conduct, and not to rest satisfied without having my very thoughts and intentions brought into subjection to the will of Christ.

Hammersmith, July 30, 1810.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,—My days of quietness and seclusion seem over. Since my sister's marriage I have neither been, nor am likely to be, the same settled, contemplative being I once was. How is this? say you. My friends in London and elsewhere seem to think they have now some claim upon my company;

so that, as often as I can be spared, their entreaties lay me under a sort of obligation to visit them: hence much of my time will be occupied. When at home my sphere of occupation is much enlarged, owing to many new engagements of a charitable sort which I have felt it my duty to undertake and prosecute. Love to my fellow creatures makes this a pleasing employ, and supersedes what I formerly pursued with much intensity, viz. reading and scribbling. Indeed, when I do read I find it necessary, and most pleasing to my taste, to read on those subjects that are stamped with immortality: the world appears to me such a bubble, and its pursuits such a vain chimera, that my whole soul presses forward to a more intimate acquaintance with that immortality for which it is destined; with that wisdom which will know no end; and that love which will glow for ever.

But however, my dear Mary Ann, no engagements, no new connections, will ever diminish that true regard I feel for you. Our correspondence will, I hope, be maintained to our mutual profit; and our prayers for each other be often offered up.

Could I but have you for my companion, my incentive to all that is good, how much would my happiness be increased! Indeed I now find the time tediously long since we met; and as to an interview the approaching autumn I dare not be sanguine. Come, if you can; but pray write frequently, and let not absence in any degree lessen our true regard for each other:

why should it, my beloved friend? Have we not religion to cement the bond of our friendship? and have we not an immortality to perfect and perpetuate it? What a stimulant is here, "In death not to be divided!"

We only live when we live to God. This is life eternal; and if we have the beginnings of it here we shall be prepared to stand firm against the shocks of time: nothing shall separate us from the love of God. When we look at this world, this fleeting scene, mark its changes, and feel in our inmost soul its vicissitudes—how needful, how glorious is this antidote! Let us, my dear friend, be making continual advances in a deep acquaintance with ourselves and our blessed Redeemer; be growing in that humility which shall make us feel ourselves as nothing, and Christ as our all. Our only safety consists in a permanent sense of our own weakness, and of all our strength being derived from Him who is alone the author and finisher of our faith.

I have not time to add more, having a great deal to do in a little time. We think of going to Bath in October. Adieu, my dearest friend.

Believe me most affectionately and unalterably yours, MARY ———.

DIARY.

Aug. 24, 1810.—I went to London the latter end of the first week of the Methodists' conference; it continued a fortnight after; my privileges were very great, not only in constant

opportunities of hearing the preaching, but in having social intercourse with many of the most eminent preachers for talents and piety. The work is spreading gloriously; the spirit of hearing was greater than was ever before known in London; three times there was preaching on the outside of the City-Road chapel, numbers not being able to procure a standing within the chapel.

I find these means instrumental in stirring me up to seek the Lord fully. Many blessed instances do I know and see of individuals who began their Christian course early in life, and through grace have been enabled to persevere and grow in the knowledge and love of God.—When I consider religion as the means of restoring the lost image of God to the soul of man, bringing the powers and faculties thereof to a Divine obedience; regulating the affections, exalting the motives, purifying the acts—herein I behold means adapted to the end: the imparting of true happiness to the subject of this grace. It is the beginning of heaven. Glory be to God! all this the Saviour of sinners died to procure. It is his will that, justified freely by his death, we should be sanctified in body, soul, and spirit, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, "the gift of the Father," which he promised should abundantly descend after his resurrection.

How manifestly then is religion a progress, a race, a warfare! repentance is not the work of a day; every failure on our part demands it:

watchfulness is the perpetual duty of the Christian that he sin not in his heart against the great God. The inquiry at the close of every day should be, how far we have advanced in conformity to the Divine will, and whether a principle of love to the Saviour is the actuating motive of our obedience?

A remark of Mr. B.'s I wish ever to remember and enforce on others: "*Never to be satisfied with your religion till it makes you happy.*"—Daily to walk with God. How earnestly do I wish it. I am determined in the Divine strength to press forward with more earnestness, to keep within the veil, as a friend urged me to do; to have more and more of the mind that was in Christ Jesus; looking to him for the supply of all my need.

Aug. 27, 1810.—If ever I felt an ardent hunger and thirst after righteousness, it has been the past day. Last night I felt powerfully convinced that my love to the Redeemer had been too cold; that he and the salvation he procured were by far too little the object of my faith. I earnestly prayed that my whole dependence might be on him. This morning I felt renewed desires after this faith; my whole soul was engaged; and to be filled with his righteousness, to have truth in my inward parts, to be saved from all sin; how did I thirst for this! how did I importune the Father of mercies! and O! how intrusive seemed every object which at all diverted my soul from these meditations. I felt the sacred fire of Divine

love ; all worldly talk and desires were intrusive on the calm of my soul, and the aspiration of my desires. The sermon this evening just fell in with the train of my thoughts this day on purity of heart. Who shall circumscribe the Holy One ? He who touches the heart by his Spirit may so touch it as to extirpate sin, and save with this full salvation. I do believe this. O may I never cease to pray for it ; but under the influence of power as boundless as his love, believe and become a partaker of the Divine nature.

Aug. 29, 1810.—-Yesterday my father kindly took me in his chaise to London, to see and bid farewell to dear Mr. and Mrs. Moore, who purpose leaving it for Bath on Monday next. The ministrations of that good man were so much blessed to me that I should ever think it a privilege to love and pray for him.

In the afternoon I spent a few hours at Dr. Adam Clarke's, who kindly interested me with a sight of some of his superb eastern manuscripts ; the splendour of some of the paintings of Persian poems and a Koran far exceed, for life and beauty, any thing I ever beheld. English productions never so much delighted me. In one of these MSS. the sun is represented shining in gold, with astonishing effect. The doctor has a superb and most extensive collection of books. He afterward took me into *his* palace, the library ; which is almost a museum, and contains a large collection of eastern curiosities, two very fine mosaic pictures, &c,

&c. He has in his possession one of the first translations of the Old and New Testaments in English, *written* about 1370; he showed me also the first edition of the Greek Testament, in the fifth volume of the Complutensian Polyglott. His copy of this rare polyglott seems to have come out of the royal library at Madrid; it is in high preservation, and has the Spanish arms on the back and sides of each volume.

How inexhaustible are these amusements, which are rational and consonant with religion! what fields of science to explore which raise the mind to wonder and adoration of the Supreme Being! How charming is Divine philosophy! Lord, enlighten my understanding; let my views of thee be enlarged, and my desires increase to know thee and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; that my soul, restored to thy Divine image, may have here a commencement of that bliss which will be perfected in the regions of endless light and felicity! Amen.

Sept. 16, 1810.—This is the twenty-fourth return of my natal day: and O that I could express half that I feel of the goodness of that Being who gave, and has preserved my existence amid such countless mercies: all the return I can make is to give myself up wholly to him, which I desire this day to do more than I have ever done before. His law do I love; his commandments are my delight, and I desire to have no will but his. Accept the poor return, O Lord; and make my heart thy constant abode. I can truly and thankfully ac-

knowledge that the last year has been the best and happiest of my life. With but little interruption I have enjoyed a sense of God's favour; and have found an increasing portion of faith and love: a greater deadness to the world; and a desire to live only to the glory of that Saviour who has called me from darkness to light: and while I feel the thirst which I now do after all the mind that was in Christ, I am certain the Holy Spirit will shed abroad the love in my heart by which I shall be made to delight in his ways. Lord, give me watchfulness and faith to look within the veil, that the blessed inheritance reserved for those that love thee, may be discernible to my spiritual sight; and may I never consider I have attained what is to be attained till the very thoughts of my heart are renewed. During the last year I have united myself, I trust with an indissoluble union, to those whom some call the Wesleyan Methodists. As it regards myself, I bless God they were ever brought to this village. That they preach the *pure* Gospel my examination of the subject leads me to decide. Happiness is the result of the religion they enforce: I have found it so; and with this people I desire to live and die. My improvement during the past year has not, indeed, been in proportion to my opportunities. I have much cause for shame. My affections have too often been worldly, and my vigilance slack in the pursuit of heaven. O may the coming year find me more zealously alive, more importunately anx-

ious in Divine things; and if it should please the Lord to remove me to a sphere wherein different relative duties may be called into exercise, O that his Spirit may illuminate and guide, so that my light may shine; and glory to God in the highest be the effect of my walk and conversation. God will direct my paths: and he will not suffer me to err while I look to him and depend upon him for direction. My mind has, on this subject of promise, been unusually drawn out; I have felt confident of parental guidance and of my safety beneath heavenly direction. This day, O Lord, I record the goodness of thy name, the faithfulness of thy word. O receive me to the arms of thy protection: guide me by thy Spirit; and as I this day solemnly dedicate myself to *Thee*, take Jesus for my *Redeemer*, and the Holy Spirit for my *Sanctifier*; so I desire to make no reserve, but devote body, soul, and spirit, all that I have and all that I am, to that gracious Being who made me, and has the first and only claim. Amen.

About this time she received another society ticket, on the back of which she has written, "Panting after a full conformity to the image of God; fully convinced, that to love him with *all* my heart is my privilege, and shall be my prayer."

Toward the latter end of the year 1810, a most important era in Miss Hanson's life com-

menced; her acquaintance with Mr. John Cooper, of London, which afterward terminated in marriage. Every step she took in this most momentous business was marked with prudent caution, extreme self-diffidence, and the humblest dependence on the direction of God. Indeed the whole of this connection was conducted in such a way as was highly creditable to her good sense and piety, and affords an admirable model of great Christian simplicity, and highly spiritualized affection, on a subject in which these are rarely consulted, and in which, above all others, they are most necessary. She thus introduces the subject in her Diary; her letters to Mr. C. will explain the rest:—

Sept. 20, 1810.—A circumstance within the last fortnight has taken place, with which, it is probable, my future happiness is essentially connected. Of this I am fully satisfied that it has not been of my own seeking, or foreseeing; that I have thus far acted in the way the circumstances demanded; and whatever may be the result, all within me now says, "Thy will be done."

I never felt such entire submission: I am impressed with awe; and hardly know how to hope. That God in his providence shall be my guide, so far as he manifests his ways to me, I feel determined. At present it appears to bear the impression of his hand: my soul

has been earnestly and almost incessantly engaged in importuning his direction. I will follow where he leads. I am not my own: into a solemn covenant I have entered with him to devote body and soul to his service. To live to his glory is the prevailing desire of my heart; how impious then to doubt his care, or question his love!

To Mr. John Cooper.

H——, September 15, 1810.

As your favour of the 10th instant was not received until yesterday afternoon, it will sufficiently account for any apparent want of attention to your request.

To our knowledge of each other, so recent and so unexpected, we may perhaps have to acknowledge the interference of a Divine Providence; at the same time it demands the greater deliberation; and any thing like *haste*, or a speedy decision in an affair so momentous in its consequences, I feel satisfied you will not require. I will, however, assure you that no *prior* engagement will prevent me from giving your proposal that consideration which I conceive it merits. As I trust we are both interested in the love and care of a heavenly Parent, I can cheerfully refer the event to his will, satisfied that he will accomplish his own purposes of benignity toward us. If a more intimate acquaintance would promote his glory and our true welfare, we should do injustice to our-

selves, and to his revealed will, to doubt his especial guidance.

In religious sentiments I dare believe we should cordially unite; and this to me would be a most essential requisite; but in a relation so near, so indissoluble, how necessary also is a union of *disposition*, *taste*, and *pursuits*. How far we thus assimilate, personal acquaintance alone can evince. I rejoice that you fill a situation, at once so honourable and useful, in the Methodist society. May grace and wisdom abundantly descend upon you. I rejoice also to acknowledge that although I do not owe my first serious convictions to the society to which I now belong, yet to them I am indebted, under the Divine blessing, for all the real happiness I have derived from a celestial source. I find that an increasing devotion of all I have and am to God is my ardent desire. If it should please God more nearly to unite our interests, I trust this would be the *one* grand and mutual aim of our lives.

I have a dear friend and father (as he kindly designated himself) in Dr. H. From a very warm solicitude that he expressed for my future welfare, particularly on the subject which has produced our correspondence, I gave him a promise that I would avail myself of his parental kindness in consulting him on any such occasion. I feel in such an instance his friendship a privilege, and I hope, through him, my father will be made acquainted with your proposal. How that will be received I am at a loss to de-

termine. It will be considered a *robbery;* and in that investigation which a kind parent naturally makes for a child whose comfortable settlement is the main object of his solicitude, you may find him a little particular. The motive, to a considerate mind, will screen him from undue censure.

It is probable, sir, that in the course of the following week I shall either see or hear from Dr. H. Let us not, however, slacken in our diligence to implore Divine direction that the path may be made plain, that the will of the Lord may be known, *by the concurrence of my parents.* I feel such a tenderness for them—such a desire to *honour* them in the choice I make in life, that you must expect me to be very implicit in yielding to *reasonable* objections. Believe me, with sentiments of Christian regard,

MARY HANSON.

To Mr. John Cooper.

London, October 2, 1810.

My brother J. yesterday made my father acquainted with your proposal, who was much pleased at my having previously consulted Dr. H. He seemed disposed to wait on your friend Mr. B., which it is probable he will do to-day. I feel satisfied that my dear father will give it a suitable investigation, as he received the first information without those prejudices which would have warped his judgment; and therefore I must refer you to the latter part of my first letter, as to the line of conduct I should think it my indispensable duty to pursue.

You must not expect to see me before I leave town. Farewell! May the God of peace dwell with you.

M. H.

To the same.

October 6, 1810.

I find my father has been to Mr. B., but as to the result of the interview I am quite ignorant. It is probable Mr. B. can inform you. Allow me, however, to request you to defer your intended visit here, till it shall receive the sanction of an authority I am bound to respect and obey.

We have committed ourselves to the guidance of unerring wisdom. It becomes us, therefore, to rest satisfied until the manifestations of his will are made known. In this instance, I have the fullest confidence that whatever is the result our good will be the consequence.

M. H.

To the same.

October 20, 1810.

You so earnestly entreated me to write a few lines ere the close of this week, that although I have nothing new to communicate, I should not feel myself quite justified in not complying with your request.

I think, my dear friend, thus far, we have reason to believe, God has heard and is answering our prayers.

I can most cheerfully refer the future to Him who has thus far been mindful of our requests;

and as our mutual aim has been the glory of God, and the best interest of our souls, we may still repose under the shadow of that omnipotence promised and exerted in our behalf. How incalculably great are our privileges ; our supports and hopes are not derived from beings frail and mutable as ourselves. The Great Eternal is engaged on our behalf: he is the source and centre of all that soothes the life of man. O that we may drink deeper into this knowledge, till we are filled with all the fulness of God. Religion is the only basis of true friendship ; the only ground for its perpetuity. What a desolate thing is the human heart without it ! My confidence in you, and in our acquaintance, has arisen from the assurance I have that the Spirit of God has made your heart his dwelling place ; that your best affections are devoted to the supreme good ; and that if a nearer acquaintance should be allotted us, your attainments in religion would be as means of grace to me.

As a direct communication is opened between you and my dear father, I wish you now to follow the dictates of your own judgment, without consulting me.

I have just finished the first part of Dr. Clarke's Commentary on the Bible ; never did I receive so much pleasure and profit from the perusal of any thing. I intend giving it, with the marginal references, a second perusal.

Our journey to Bath is still quite unsettled. We are disappointed of a letter to-day which

we expected to decide it. Should I go with my mother my father will be prevented accompanying us; so I shall leave you to obtain *his consent* to our correspondence while absent. If I go I shall expect to be the bearer of a letter from you to our dear friend Mr. M. The thoughts of once again seeing him and hearing him preach, exceedingly reconcile me to the idea of leaving home.

M. H.

DIARY.

Oct. 23, 1810.—Still, through the grace of God, I am enabled to hold on my way rejoicing. I find religion, inconceiveably beyond my former apprehensions, a source and spring of true happiness and peace; to which I was a stranger till enabled to give my heart up to God, and make his service the prevailing disposition and delight of my heart. I am sensible that every good desire and action is alone from the assistance of the Spirit of God. I find that I have no strength independent of him; but glory be to his name, he is at all times accessible, and always *waiting* to be gracious. To press forward is my earnest desire; to know nothing but "Jesus Christ and him crucified," to devote every power and faculty of my soul to his service is the *ardent* wish of my heart. What a burning zeal have I sometimes found to be more actively employed in the service of my Lord. I have often besought of God to make me an instrument of more extensive use-

fulness; as inactivity in a Christian seems to me so inexcusable.

In the course of *His* unerring providence who is the overseer of our ways, a path I little expected seems now opening. That acquaintance which I have before hinted at, which I from the first believed *from* God, and which I most entirely referred *to* God, appears *now* to be most evidently the work of his providence. The *mark* I earnestly besought him to give, *it now bears*; the concurrence of my dear parents. No difficulties seem now to oppose our friendship. Mr. C. is to be introduced into our family on Saturday.

In no occurrence of my life have I ever so decidedly traced the hand of God as in this.—This newly acquired friend seems to possess all I could desire in the relation likely to result from our friendship. Settled and solid piety, accompanied by that activity in the cause of religion I so much value; a well cultivated and good understanding, an amiable and affectionate disposition, with the same religious sentiments, and connected with the same society as myself. As it is *from* God, I trust it will most eminently lead *to* him, and that a union formed on such a basis will be of especial use to us and to the Church of Christ. My ability and sufficiency are alone of God.

Oct. 30, 1810.—Friday is the day appointed for our going to Bath, a visit which I trust will produce much profit as well as pleasure; transient is that which only delights the eye and the imagina-

tion; but when connected with this, the soul receives supplies of Divine nourishment, is made happy by the immediate communication of the Fountain of all good; then peace maintains its position, and every thing conspires to make the mind joyful. Watchfulness and prayer, how perpetually needful! For the few last days I have been much harassed and very dull and insensible to Divine things. Last night I earnestly prayed for the restoration of my peace; and in some measure found it. I dread lukewarmness, and never can know peace out of God, who has visited me with so many communications of his love. Lord, I would make a fresh surrender: let nothing ever interpose between thee and my soul! I do love thee above all the world! I anticipate much delight from the company of dear Mr. and Mrs. Moore at Bath; his preaching has often been much blessed to me, and his private communications always enlivening. I hope, through the blessing of God, to acquire fresh strength and vigour in the best things, at Bath. I may now maintain an authorized correspondence with my friend Mr. C. It has all the earthly approbation I could desire. The heavenly benediction will, I trust, eminently rest upon our acquaintance; without this, we shall in vain look for comfort. If God design me to fulfil this important relation I feel assured of his heavenly assistance. In knowing whence every blessing flows, I can confidently look up to him who will supply my

every need. May I have faith to receive, and God will bestow!

Nov. 2, 1810.—Accompanied by my mother and brothers John and William I left Hammersmith for Bath; where, after a tolerably pleasant journey, we arrived about ten at night.

To Mr. John Cooper.

Bath, November 5, 1810.

It is well that so pleasing a resource is left to separated friends, and that one's thoughts can be communicated with as much vigour and effect at the distance of a hundred miles as of four; and this surely may be the case when *unreserve* and *sincerity* are allowed to exercise themselves. This then, my dear friend, shall be the character of our correspondence: distance now forbidding personal intercourse, we will endeavour to make ourselves known to each other by mental discoveries, and try to ascertain how far "thought meeting thought," the result of preconceived opinions gives rational ground of hope, that in the closest union no future sources of disquietude will arise from a native dissimilarity. My views on this subject are by no means common-place; they are the result of a little thought and much observation. With the *ordinary* lot of connubial happiness, I confess to you I should not only be dissatisfied but unhappy. From one expression of yours I am led to believe that if this be a romantic notion you are also under its influence. Perhaps as believers in the doctrine of Christian perfection, we may

be forgiven for placing our standard somewhat higher than the generality of Christians; and if in this respect we do but think and *aim* alike, I feel convinced that our object will be attained. Excuse the length of the preface.

Through the good providence of God we had a safe and pleasant journey; we reached Bath a very little after ten o'clock. On the following day we suited ourselves with the apartments which we now occupy, commanding the most interesting and beautiful view of this city; having in both front and back rooms an uninterrupted view of the most luxuriant hills, possessing the character of Bath, with houses one above another. To the south we view Beacher cliff with its hanging woods, the highest hill I have seen. The Avon, just beneath our window, meanders beautifully along. We are, indeed, thoroughly pleased with the situation. Of Bath I can say but little, being much indisposed *on Saturday*. I am, however, prepared to believe it the most interesting city by far I have ever seen. As you have been here I shall not occupy my paper with any farther remarks upon it; the tendency of our correspondence being of a more important nature.

I found the services of yesterday peculiarly profitable; heard Mr. J. preach morning and evening, and perhaps this enjoyment was increased by the persuasion I had that you, my dear friend, had implored this blessing at the hand of God for me. What a privilege to *have access* to the throne of God! There, all we

need has been purchased for us by our adorable Redeemer! My mother and I called on Mrs. M. in the afternoon. Mr. M. was in Frome; not expected in Bath till Wednesday. I left your letter in the hands of Mrs. M., who I am happy to say is amazingly recovered. They knew through Mrs. J. we were expected at Bath, and I suppose have had a hint of something else. Not a word, however, passed yesterday. I hope to see Mr. M. next Wednesday morning, and to hear him preach next Sunday. You must expect me to be considerably influenced by his verdict, *pro* or *con*, as I apprehend the nature of your intimacy with him has led to a developement of your whole soul. The assurances *you* have given me, my dear friend, certainly have weight because they are from a Christian; were they from a *doubtful* character in this respect I should regard them as the necessary consequence of an intimacy with such an object in view. They always precede marriage; but, alas! how seldom are they fulfilled after. Although a former connection may in some respects be objectionable to my mind;—yet, as in the instance of yourself, it has tended to try you, and to call forth domestic qualities; and as they were of a nature truly worthy of regard; though, alas! for your happiness, but of short continuance; yet that little narrative has done more for you in my estimation than all I have seen and all I have heard beside. Should I ever have an equal place in your affections, and find you in all respects what I wish, I will

answer for myself that you and the domestic circle round which I shall revolve will be all the world to me; and all my endeavours will be to promote and maintain that happiness which, by a proper discharge of relative and religious duties, is attainable in this life. It gives me much pleasure that you have derived from the same source that I have profitable pleasure in reading. How many hours of rational amusement have I enjoyed in this way: how often, when I knew nothing of the peace resulting from acceptance with God, have the little domestic vexations I have met with been borne with patience, from the idea that in my own closet with my books I should forget my troubles; and by the relations of days of yore find my heart and imagination fully occupied. How often did I regard with pity those who knew no happiness independent of company and the ball-room. These were days of enjoyment: but, O my dear friend, of how low and changeable a nature compared with that peace which passeth all understanding! which, through the infinite love and grace of God, I have since possessed.

My brother requests me to walk with him. Adieu. I am going to ascend the heights to the Crescents.

Farewell: may the God of love and peace dwell with you. How is your health? Do you in general enjoy good health? My mother thinks you look so delicate, that I have had fears. Believe me your very affectionate friend, MARY ——.

To Mr. John Cooper.

Bath, November 12, 1810.

Indeed, my dear friend, I anticipated and received more pleasure from your last kind letter, than from any of the preceding ones. The contents were altogether congenial to my mind. My hopes and expectations are now alive to the solid happiness reserved for us, in the prosecution of that acquaintance, so obviously from the Father of all good. The conviction of this increases upon me by reflection and prayer. I feel, indeed, no doubt that if it shall please God to unite us in nearer bonds, it will be the means of more closely uniting each of us to himself.—It is true, indeed, my deficiencies are very great, far greater than you apprehend; but, "help being laid upon One that is mighty," I feel full of blissful confidence, that the race I have begun I shall be enabled to run with increasing vigour, with the expectation of comprehending more and more, by happy experience, the heights and depths of love Divine.

I regard true religion as the only source of happiness; and that is an effect produced in proportion to the entire surrender we make of our hearts, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. O my dear friend, may this be our daily aim and walk through life. Our blessed Saviour, the standard of our imitation, who had the happiness of his creatures only in view, prescribed nothing but what *here* has that tendency. If we live under the influence of these hopes

and endeavours, I fear not the fulfilment of my most sanguine expectations. *Love* to *God* is the source of every Christian excellence; and surely it was in the exercise of providential love, that we were brought to the communication of this *oneness* of opinion.

By this time I apprehend Mr. M. has answered your letter, the contents of which I find imparted no ordinary pleasure. For on the receipt of it, he with his amiable wife knelt down and implored the blessing of Heaven upon us. How much I felt indebted for this pious instance of their regard! Yesterday, under Mr. M.'s preaching, I found a renewal of that benefit I invariably experienced at H. from his ministry. The blessed man was quite alive; and every sentence reached my heart. In the morning he preached from Hab. iii, 2: "O Lord, revive thy work!" In the evening from John iii, 7: "Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again." I hope long and ever to feel the effects of these sermons; my strength is renewed; and to be more filled with the Holy Spirit is at once my privilege and prayer. The chapel was crowded in the evening. Bath is the very place for Mr. M.'s abilities to be appreciated; and I feel certain his labours will be much blessed. I expect him to call here this morning.

What privileges, my dear friend, we have as Methodists! I find this more and more.—Christian fellowship being such a powerful means of abstracting us from the world, and making us alive to the collective as well as indi-

vidual privileges of Christians. May every talent intrusted to us be improved a hundred fold!

I have just been interrupted by a visit from Mr. J.; as I was alone, I had the pleasure of a serious and interesting conversation with him.

And so you are going into Lancashire? Be careful of yourself, and *do not trifle with colds:* I hope you will have returned before we shall get back to H——. Write punctually, and do not let me suffer from your journeying. Our continuance here is quite uncertain. I hardly think it will be in the whole a month.

We went to Bristol and Clifton last Thursday, and had quite a wet day for our excursion; nevertheless, I went to see the beautiful St. Vincent's Rocks. Such a lovely spot! We must visit it together.

My brother J. has this morning left us. He asked me if I had any message; it is probable he will call on you. You are received quite with cordiality by my brothers; and I believe by all.

May this friendship, which is thus marked by the approbation of earth and Heaven, be a continual source of thankfulness to each of us.—May our Christian walk be marked with all that can adorn our profession: and Dr. Clarke's description* of the original institution, and its everlasting design, be realized to us.

What more shall I say, than express my hope and confidence that God will enable us to be

* Commentary on Genesis, chap. ii.

what we desire. That we may live to his glory, and be continually pressing after all that holiness, which shall sanctify us throughout, in body, soul, and spirit. Animating hopes! To this God of love I commend you, and remain yours, most affectionately,

M. H.

To Mr. John Cooper.

Bath, November 19, 1810.

As correspondents, my dear friend, we seem to approve of each other very well. I trust the same coincidents will manifest themselves in all we do; and that a growing similarity will be the result of a daily Christian walk. You have had painful experience of the uncertain tenure of earthly blessings;* it is a lesson we shall all learn: "The spider's most attenuated thread is cord, is cable to man's slender tie on earthly bliss." Unless things of heavenly substance engross our best affections, our Father, who is in heaven, will remind us that he is a *jealous God*. Thus, watching unto prayer must be our constant bent of mind—O how needful! Our dear friend, Mr. M., on Saturday when I saw him desired me to present his love to you, and say, "You are now in danger, that you have need of much watchfulness." Can you interpret his meaning? he addressed me to the same effect. Our intimacy began *well*: for my own part, I

* Alluding to Mr. C.'s former wife, a very amiable and excellent woman, who died about twelve months after their marriage.

never in any instance felt such an entire surrender of my own will, nor so ardent a desire that God only might be glorified: and when at one time a dark cloud hovered over the opening prospect, which I could not at all penetrate, a sense of the omnipotence of that Being who was my hope and confidence dissipated all doubt from my mind. I knew he would accomplish his own designs. O the happiness of having the almighty Jehovah for our friend! May our love and confidence in him increase.

My sister expresses herself as quite delighted with your dear little girl. I am rejoiced to find that there is already the *bud* of so much excellence, "a quickness of apprehension, united to great sweetness of temper." I am pleased that you are to have the credit of *rationality*, in what is already conspicuous in your instruction of the little dear. I much desire to see her.

M. H.

To Mr. John Cooper.

Bath, November 26, 1810.

This will, I hope, find you safely restored to the enjoyment of your own fireside; where a new ebenezer of praise has no doubt been erected to that God, who, by the guardian influence of his angels, may have defended you from all evil. To owe protection to his *love*, is to have every blessing blessed. You ask for a long letter: I will endeavour not to *disappoint* you, but as I am much indisposed, having a sore throat, and rather an increasing degree of

fever, you will excuse me if necessity should compel me to abandon my present intention; indeed, there is so intimate a union between our corporeal and mental powers, that that which gives us sensibility of suffering suffers also. Should I be a little gloomy, you will know to what cause to impute it. It is a very stormy day too; perhaps the vapours which must condense the atmosphere, may unite their influence to cloud my mind; and yet peace, the kind boon of Heaven, does pervade my spirit. It is often assailed, sometimes powerfully, by outward causes; but the prospect of unclouded bliss, like the sun, as yet beneath the horizon, cheers me in this world.

* * * * * * * * *

I cannot suppose that any thing can give me real pleasure that is not connected with religion. My understanding (as well as affections) is so powerfully convinced of its testimony, that I cleave to it as to a strong hold, and firmly believe our happiness keeps pace with our holiness. At times I feel a little overpowered with the responsibility which attaches itself to my future character. You, my dear friend, have expectations *too highly* raised; I must check you, as I would some others of my too partial friends.

I was much affected in hearing of the approaching dissolution of your pious friend. Though, indeed, the deathbed of such a man cannot produce unmixed sorrow; angels wait-

ing to conduct the happy spirit to the sight of those joys which so long had been beheld as through a glass darkly. I have ceased to entertain curious speculations on the nature and employments of the heavenly world. My own experience tells me, that to be for ever free from *sin*, to know no interruption to a perfect love to God, will be heaven to me: I can anticipate no higher. I enjoyed a sweet foretaste of this one morning last week, and sunk deeper into my own nothingness, and had fuller views of Christian holiness than I ever had before.—O my dear friend, "my willing soul would stay in such a frame as this:" but, alas! its continuance is too short; and I think my volatile nature will ever oppose itself to those *permanent* enjoyments: yet even a glimpse should be matter of earnest thankfulness. It proves such a cordial; and even the recollection of it excites the hope that these "angel visits, few and far between," may hereafter prove more frequent and more permanent.

I heard Mr. M. preach twice yesterday. In the morning I think he made one of the greatest and deepest sermons I ever heard, from John vii, 9, 10, relative to the intercession of Christ, and the salvation of those whom the Father gave him. You know this is one of the strongest holds of our opponents, the Calvinists. Our view of the subject he admirably, and, I think, unanswerably defended. It was a sermon I should much like to possess; and I intend to ask the favour of Mr. M. to write me a general view of that part of the subject.

The sun now shines; and I feel better than I did when I began, less inconvenience from my throat. I however fear this letter will not much interest you; but you know when a correspondence is undertaken, it is for "better and for worse;" and while it is a faithful portraiture of the mind, the effects of clouds, as well as sunshine, will be visible. This being a *state* of *trial*, our happiness here will have an alloy: what need of Christian armour, if we were never to be assailed by foes? While we follow on to know the Lord, victory is certain, and heaven our sure reversion. May we thus prove excitements to each other, and "square our useful lives below, by reason and by grace."

* * * * * * * *

M. H.

To Mr. John Cooper.

Bath, December 3, 1810.

I am willing to believe my dear friend, that the correspondence our separation has occasioned has not only been a pleasure, but has tended to enlarge our knowledge of each other; and to lay open future probable sources of reciprocal happiness, should it please God so to perpetuate our friendship. "True love strikes root in reason;" and certainly where the understanding is suffered to lie dormant, and the affections *alone* act and are supreme, such an attachment would be exposed to ten thousand variations; and at length, perhaps, to an almost total extinction. May I not venture to believe

that an assimilation in understanding, sentiments, and aims, exists between us; and that the love of God will prove an indissoluble bond to our union. Earthly relations, of course, cease in heaven; but I believe the most purified affections will subsist among all the redeemed and that "we shall know even as we are known." This state, my dear friend, is but the infancy of our being. In reference to this idea, let us live and act and anticipate full draughts of that bliss, which here we only taste.

Should I ever fall short of the expectations my letters have raised in your mind, I will give you leave to advert to them, and reprove me thus; neither will I ever *rebel* against your *lordly* prerogative, while you render the yoke easy by the fulfilment of your part of the story.

The apostolic exhortations will furnish us with our *orders*, which are never given without *arms*.

Need I tell you that I consider our correspondence of the *most confidential* nature; its avowed object has excited a freedom in my remarks, which the sincerity we both professed to adopt on the outset has justified. As it is now drawing to a close, I wish you to give a *direct answer* to both my last letters, and tell me honestly whether you have an unabated and entire confidence that I shall possess as large a share of your affections as your much loved Margaret? This is indispensable to your happiness and mine; and perhaps it shall be the last time I will ever teaze you with the interrogation.—

Much less would have been said on the subject, had I not a fixed *aversion* to the idea of plunging myself into the varied and multiplied cares and anxieties of a married life, without the most *positive* expectation of possessing the entire *confidence* and *affections* of him to whom I should so awfully entrust my future all. Indeed I have frequent misgivings of heart, and I am so locally attached to H——, that I wonder I ever listened to a proposal which could personally alienate me from it. *If it be from God* it shall be for good:—and this is my confidence.

It remains for you, my dear friend, to close our Bath correspondence. I shall expect a long letter in gratitude for receiving two.

I have enjoyed Bath upon the whole very much; and shall feel considerable regret in leaving some kind friends. I trust I have been making some advances in the Divine life. I certainly feel more of my deficiencies, and more Divine power has attended my meditations on the Scriptures; but O how many unprofitable hours have I spent? indeed there is so much idleness consequent on visiting these places that my conscience has often reproached me for it.

Last Friday I took a most delightful walk on the banks of a canal which runs parallel with the river Avon. The uncommon beauty of the scenery, heightened by the loveliness of the day, urged me on to a considerable extent. I had so much exceeded my ordinary bounds of a walk, that when I reached home I was com-

pletely exhausted with fatigue. I walked fast without any intermission for three hours, for which temerity I was close prisoner on Saturday, almost lamed with fatigue. My object was to reach a place I had heard of, where the canal *crosses* the river Avon, rather a curiosity, which I did not accomplish. I have had some sweet solitary walks. I hope you are an admirer of the works of nature; and do not despise occasional enthusiastic raptures in the contemplation of his works in the least of which the Deity is so conspicuous: I am sure you do not. You enjoy poetry too. I have so long received pleasure from the resources of my own mind, and am so entirely out of debt to external sources of amusement, that I am almost *miserly* in cherishing the channels through which these silent unobserved enjoyments have flowed.

How sublimity is heightened, my dear friend, when we can "lift to heaven an unpresumptuous eye, and smiling, say, *My Father* made them all." As a friend said to me the other day, we can never truly bless God for our *creation*, till we can for our *redemption*. Enabled to do this, my dear friend, our lives should be a tribute of praise.

M. H.

The following letter written to her father, in reference to this subject, is at once a fine proof of her good sense, deep piety, and profound filial respect and gratitude:—

Bath, December 3, 1810.

My very Dear Father,—Your truly kind and invaluable letter of yesterday demands an early acknowledgment. I cannot express the half of what I felt on reading its interesting contents. My sensations were those of mingled love and gratitude for so unexpected a proof of your affection. Had you in any of your previous letters expressed a wish to hear from me, I should certainly have complied with it: though I could not but feel a degree of backwardness in adverting to a subject you have so kindly noticed.

* * * * * * * *

Home now begins to wear a desirable aspect; where, upon the whole, my dear mother would rather embrace you than subject you to the fatigue of so long a journey for the pleasure of spending only a few days here. On Saturday morning, if it please God, we hope to see you: and in a few weeks I trust it will be apparent that my mother's health has been obviously benefited by the change of air and waters, the good effects of which, I believe, are seldom immediately discernible.

I am much concerned to find, my dearest father, that you continue so very lame, but truly thankful that your now almost necessary confinement at St. James's has been so much mitigated by the solid satisfaction arising from an experimental acquaintance with Divine truth —It is consolatory to believe we can be en-

gaged in no conflict, however severe, in which our spiritual weapons are not fully adequate to the conquest. It is when we trust to our own strength that the world obtains the victory.—I most sincerely wish that circumstances may allow of your losing no opportunity of hearing dear Mr. Fry, for whose ministerial labours, we as a family have so much cause of thankfulness.

I never had the pleasure of receiving but one letter from my dear father, beside the one I am now acknowledging; and I feel emotions of gratitude to God in contrasting the period in which that was written with the present. At that time you, with parental tenderness, were warning me against that gayety of disposition I then manifested, and those antichristian pursuits after which I was so eager.

To Divine grace alone am I indebted for that entire alteration of hopes and aims, and for that blessed foretaste I often enjoy of the *rest* which in heaven remains for me. May you and I, my dearest father, feel more and more that our Redeemer has purchased for us sanctification as well as justification; and that the implantation of a new nature makes his service our delight and perfect freedom.

I hope I feel truly grateful for that kind interest you manifest in regard to my future prospects, arising from a connection which, if sealed with a solemn perpetuity, will remove me from under the eye and roof of my dear parents, of whose kind and fostering care I

shall have so many pleasing recollections.—My dear father, I feel the importance of the step; but I feel also a hope bordering on confidence, that that gracious Being who overrules all events, and has expressly promised to guide those who trust in him, has in this instance manifested his will. I believe too there is every rational ground to expect domestic comfort.

* * * * * * *

New relations will, I hope, never alienate my affections from old ones. For your many prayers I feel inexpressibly grateful; and have long acted on the idea that the best return I can make is by constantly remembering my father at the same throne of mercy.

Believe me, my very dear father, your most dutiful and affectionate daughter,

MARY HANSON.

DIARY.

Dec. 7, 1810.—Indeed I shall have much reason to recall to mind my visit to Bath; it has been upon the whole very profitable to me. Added to the benefit I have found in Divine ordinances, the letters of my dear friend have much tended to excite me to seek with him a *full* salvation.

Our acquaintance is from God: I feel it so more and more: with this impression can I, in a spiritual sense, expect too much or feel too thankful? Emotions of regret I shall feel in

leaving Bath. In departing from a place where pleasure has been received, the uncertainty of ever more beholding it casts a mournful emotion over the soul. A stray tear will flow down the cheek; this I have always found; and there are sensibilities of the soul which I would not forego for all the stoical firmness in the world. The passions, when they are refined and sanctified by true religion, are sources of pure delight.

Christmas day, 1810.—The return of this day interests me much in a two-fold point of view:—*First*, As the season in which the most extraordinary event which ever took place in this world is celebrated. The nativity of the God-man is the birth of every hope fallen nature could have of a restoration of the lost favour and image of the Diety. A contrivance of satisfying the *Divine justice* which could alone originate in the *Divine mind*. By it we have entrance into the holy of holies; and the gates of heaven are thrown open to receive all who in truth receive this incarnate Saviour into their hearts.

As a *second* motive ought I not to hold the return of this day in solemn and grateful remembrance? on the past one, 1809, having received a sweet manifestation of my interest in the favour of God: when all my doubts and fears were dissolved, and my soul swallowed up in devotion and aspirations after God. Blessed be God, the *witness* he gave still remains; and on this day I gratefully record that my desires

are greater than ever to be altogether the Lord's. 'Tis true, alas! my attainments bear no proportion to my privileges; and but for the infinite merits of that atonement Jesus made, I should have just cause to fear rejection from the favour of God. But he knows my frame, and remembers I am but dust; and he accepts my sincere desires to be his, and my ardent longings after full conformity to the Divine image; for this end I surrender myself this day; and feeling my utter dependence on Divine aid and my native helplessness, "looking unto Jesus," I trust I shall become more than conquerer over all my foes. The last night was so exceedingly tempestuous that I could not sleep: but never did I find wakefulness so profitable; never were my nocturnal meditations so sweet. While the raging tempest made me to hear and feel the Deity abroad, and contemplate his judgments which are now so evidently manifested in the earth, I could not help contrasting the thunder of his power with the Babe in Bethlehem. It was by the WORD all things were made:—"and the WORD became flesh, and dwelt among us." He made the world by his word, and man by his breath: yet to redeem him he must leave the heaven of heavens, assume our nature, and in that nature bleed! thence I took a survey of the world; of the negligence and general indifference to this stupendous fact: men closing their eyes to this light, and wantonly choosing that place where hope never comes. That God should in indignation pour out the vials of his wrath

against the children of men who do despite to the precious blood of Christ I marvelled not; but rather felt amazed at the longsuffering of God. Those who will not listen to the still small voice of his mercy may expect to hear and bear the thunder of his wrath.

But when I looked on myself, and found in my heart an humble hope that I was accepted through this incarnation; when I could appeal to the Searcher of hearts, and say, "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee;" O then, how little to be dreaded is all that this earth can do? what is its power contrasted with His "who taketh up the isles as a little thing," and has engaged himself in my behalf?

Jan. 22, 1811.—Toward the close of last month I went to London; and only returned here about a week ago. In no other place do I ever feel *at home* to write; so that I have by my absence missed recording some sweet and profitable seasons I enjoyed when in town. At the commencement of this new year I joyfully renewed my covenant with God; and was earnest in supplicating his grace to enable me to walk more closely, more usefully, this year, (should I be spared,) than the last. It seems, indeed, probable that a more enlarged sphere of activity will ere long be opened for me. That gracious Being whose I am, will I doubt not afford me grace to do his will. At the renewal of the covenant I was at Queen-street chapel; at this most solemn and obliga-

tory ordinance I found the presence of God. The Lord's Supper was after administered, of which I and my dearest friend at once partook. To be loved by one so decidedly the Lord's is an unlooked-for providence; and I have frequently, on a review of the various circumstances leading to our present interesting intimacy, been constrained to acknowledge and bless the hand of God; at times, when I have hesitated to do this, I believe the instigation was from Satan: for I have invariably found that when my mind has been most occupied with religion, I have loved and regarded my friend the most; and have anticipated with delight the probability of our being helps to each other in the way to heaven. Every succeeding interview increases my value for his character; and my conviction that He who numbers the hairs of our heads appointed us for each other.

I enjoyed last Sabbath exceedingly; Mr. Griffith preached, and it was much blessed to my soul: I went in expectation that it would be so.

April 20, 1811.—Having spent the chief part of the winter in town, at my sister's, in consequence of her confinement, I have been taken off my usual and settled plan of occasionally writing the state of my mind. I somewhat regret it, having found it a very profitable and interesting record of my experience. Ten thousand blessings that I have in this instance received, have, I trust, made an indelible record in my memory.

A present *God*, a satisfying portion, and desires more ardent to be altogether the Lord's, to be growing up into his likeness, these have, indeed, been *prominent* desires and endeavours, though occasionally clouded over with unbelief, and obstructed by lukewarmness. "He knows my infirmities, and remembers I am but dust." I have, at times, had delightful anticipations of heaven; of enjoying there a full draught of that living water of which I have just had a taste; and of having a growing love and knowledge throughout eternity.

I have found *particular* benefit from a practice suggested by my dear Mr. C. of reading the same chapter with him daily. We began (Jan. 26,) the Gospel of St. Matthew; and selected one verse in writing for our day's meditation. This I have found very profitable, though too often careless in the observance of it. In reading this blessed book on my knees, and with a simple desire of having my eyes opened by the Spirit of God, to discover and impress its important contents on my heart, I have found it sweeter to my taste than honey, and could say with David, "In thy word do I delight." I find need of watching against formality in it, and suffering it to degenerate into mere custom.

In this and our mutual engagement, at ten o'clock, to pray for each other, the Lord has often blessed our souls. O for more importunity, for more wrestling for "all the mind that was in Christ Jesus."

The Lord's Supper was much blessed to me last Sabbath. I found at the altar the spirit of self-dedication and of importunity, for poverty of spirit, and purity of heart. I bless God that I always feel restless and uneasy when my soul is not alive to him.

To-morrow we expect Dr. Clarke here; and I look forward with hope of receiving much blessing; his preaching having, invariably, been made so very useful to me.

April 25, 1811.—I was much profited by Dr. Clarke's sermon last Sunday morning, from 1 John v, 11, 12. He dwelt much on the life of God in the soul, through the influence of Jesus Christ; whose immediate energy, he said, is as necessary to support the spiritual life, as the power of God, in whom we live, move, and have our being, is to the support and continuance of our natural life. That which, before the fall, constituted the happiness of Adam—union with God—is as essential now as ever, and must be restored by the life of Christ within us. As the body cannot exist without the soul, neither can the life Divine, without Christ. It is he who gives the principle of life, and maintains it: and his influence is as necessary to maintain the spiritual life of the soul, as it is to preserve the being and harmony of the creation. He spoke much on the witness of the Spirit, as essential to the peace and stability of the Christian; and as the only means of precluding tormenting doubts and fears.

The doctor met the society after evening

preaching, in which he said many very forcible and persuasive things; and from which I derived fresh vigour, and renewed determination to redouble my diligence in the heavenly race. How deeply do I feel myself indebted to God for so much blessing my union with the Methodists. I have enjoyed this day much love to God, and delight in contemplating his name and nature, and in anticipating that "glory which no period knows." I have read my title clear, and long for that day when this mortal shall have put on immortality; and when my soul shall "soar without bound, without consuming glow."

O blessed Fountain of love! fill my heart more with this Divine principle; sink me lower in the depths of humility, and let me sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him. Enlarge my soul that I may better contemplate thy glory; and may I prove myself thy child, by bearing a resemblance to thee, my heavenly Father!

April 30, 1811.—"Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee," and that I desire, above every thing this world affords, to have the constant testimony that I walk so as toplease thee.

To have all my thoughts, words, and works, sanctified to thee; to feel the living principle of faith, and an habitual converse with spiritual and unseen things, divesting my mind of earthly prejudices, and mere earthly affections, how great a blessing! O thou, who hast inspired these desires, and excited these ardent longings

for the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit; answer me according to thy word: thy word, which is truth itself; immutable as thy glory; eternal as thy duration. O, that on it my soul may repose.

When thy love refreshes my spirit, and my eyes overflow with tears of joy in the conviction that *thou art mine*, how poor and how contemptible are all earthborn joys! When the soul feels its freedom, and exults in its immortality, the world and Satan tempt in vain. I feel inexpressibly thankful to that Being, who is the author of all the happiness I enjoy: that he continues to manifest himself in such lovely, endearing characters to my soul. And never did I feel more than I do at this time, the *importance* and *beauty* of religion.

I have no enjoyment in whatever tends to *divert* my mind from these contemplations. When I read, it must be on subjects connected with what I most love—God, in nature, providence, and grace; an endless scope for reading and meditation! Yes, I have seen a glimpse of his glory, whom my soul loveth. For that purity of heart which God only can bestow, shall be my never-ceasing prayer.

"O could I lose myself in thee,
Thy depth of mercy prove,
Thou vast unfathomable sea
Of inexhausted love."

May 1, 1811.—The more I know of my own heart, the more deeply I feel the want of humility. When this heavenly grace has taken

deep root in my soul, the fruits of the Spirit will grow in larger abundance upon it. It is for want of this, that when my opinions are controverted, and my judgment called in question, that I feel an *inward* impatience, though spared the outward expression of it: and as I have to do with God, who searches the heart, so I would be as viligant over the inward motions of corruption, as of my exterior deportment. I want *inward* holiness—

> "A heart in every thought renew'd,
> A copy, Lord, of thine."

My religion must be visible by its *effects*, not by parade and show, but by humility of soul, meekness of spirit, purity of intention. Therefore religion must be with me the work of *every moment*.

This, indeed, will tend rather to capacitate me for the proper fulfilment of all my lawful avocations; not, as some falsely say, unfit the mind for the duties of life. God demands a reasonable service; and while he calls to diligence in business, he will bestow grace to produce fervency of spirit. O God, raise me from the ruins of the fall! I only *live* when I live to thy glory. I only am happy when I can call thee mine, and exult in the prospect of enjoying thee for ever. I have ever found thee faithful; I never sought thee with my whole heart, without being answered as by fire. O let that fire descend and consume all my sins, that those enemies of my Lord may have no place in me. I cannot question that love which moved thee

to leave the abodes of glory, and to veil thyself in suffering humanity *for me*; nor that Omnipotence which said, "Let there be light, and there was light." Who then shall limit the Holy One of Israel? With thee, all things are possible; even the *full restoration* of the lost image of God in *my soul*.

May 4, 1811.—I have lately been led to reflect much on the advantage of *knowledge* in religion: by this, I mean not only an acquaintance with its doctrines, but a well digested view of its gradual developement, from the first promise given to Adam, till Jesus Christ; made plainer and plainer as it flowed down the river of time: with a comparison of this religion with all the rest that have ever appeared, and swayed the hearts and judgments of men. In addition to this, when we regard its adaptation to supply our wants, to impart food to that immortal principle within us; ever craving for what the earth cannot give, religion liberally opens her treasures, and gives the expectant soul the hope and promise, that even here she may be "filled with all the fulness of God."

I must differ from an opinion I have frequently heard expressed, and once adopted, that the poor (that is, the ignorant,) enjoy religion most. That many of them do enjoy it in a blessed degree, my own observations confirm; and, that the peculiar circumstances of many call more for the simple exercise of faith, for the supply of their daily wants, I also believe; and many happy proofs are recorded in their

experience of God's fulfilling his promises in this respect. But the believer, with an improved understanding and a correct judgment, who, at the same time, receives the kingdom of God as a little child, with all that simplicity so essentially connected with genuine conversion; while he *maintains* this childlike spirit, and has a growing enlargement of mind, consequent upon his frequent communion with God, and his nature, and his works; this is, in my apprehension, the happiest Christian; and in proportion as he regards religion as the one thing necessary to his happiness, and is jealous over every other enjoyment, in which it is not the principal ingredient, so will be his *stability*. And thus his advances will be marked with its genuine characters.

Religion is addressed to the *judgment*, as well as to the heart; it should be interwoven with all our moral perceptions; and, while it lays claim to the affections, it should have the hearty concurrence of the understanding. This I wish to enforce upon myself; and to look well how far these observations incorporate with my real state, and present experience.

To a want of this I cannot but impute the many failures in the religious life which so frequently occur, of persons who, for a while, were warm and zealous, and bidding fair for usefulness, suddenly relaxing in their energy, and becoming *ciphers*, if they outwardly continue professors in the Church of Christ.

Those who look for eminence in any science,

use the means for becoming eminent; and all their exertions tend toward the promotion of their object:—so in the Christian life. *To be* what God calls us *to be*, we must use diligence, and let it be the paramount desire of our whole lives.

May 11, 1811.—Of what importance is *experience* in religion! In every branch of science it is considered a necessary qualification. As to a physician or an artist without experience, the advice of the one would be received with little confidence, and the productions of the other would be regarded with suspicion. Eminence, the result of experience, would be expected in neither.

What then is religion without it? How can the promises be received or applied, if the affections be not in exercise? and surely love to God must excite emotions, near in resemblance and effect to those we feel toward a beloved earthly object. The mind delights to dwell on an image which occupies the heart. How solicitous to please;—how fearful to offend;—how prompt to active proofs of the sincerity of its profession: with what impatience and indignation are slanders and evil speaking borne toward the absent object of our affection.

By analogy then would I try how far my love to the Supreme Good will bear this test. Alas! the proofs are faint and feeble, though sincere. O, for more love, is my constant prayer. Religion, without experience, is like the body without the soul; like the moon, which imparts

light, but no *heat*. The plants engendered by the solar ray, would droop and die, were they forsaken by its influence, and left to the *cold*, cheerless light of the pale luminary. *So*, were I to relapse into that state of mere speculative belief, or to the unassisted powers of my own reason, which (after having experienced something of the power of religion) I once fell into; so would those affections which now, in some degree, though faintly, glow with love to God, be frozen into indifference. "If thou withdraw, 'tis night."

O Sun of righteousness, cause thy rays to descend upon my heart, and scatter every thing which would oppose thy warm and invigorating influence!

Experience in another view is so *important*, it is to the heart *demonstration;* and to the judgment it stamps divinity on the word of God. If the result of true faith be "joy and peace in believing," and my experience bears testimony to the validity of this, what farther proof can I wish of its Divine origin and tendency? And surely we may rationally have this internal consciousness, and be as certain of it as of any thing that affects our external senses. When I am under the influence of joy, could the force of any argument persuade me that sorrow fills my heart? O no. Religion does not eradicate, but it refines and exalts the passions; and enlisting this noble part of our nature into its service, by the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, causes those affections,

naturally placed on forbidden and unworthy objects, to soar and centre in heavenly themes; and gives the hope and promise that our hearts are so capable of a Divine renewal, as to "be filled with all the fulness of God."

May 26, 1811, *Sabbath Day.*—I went to chapel this morning with the earnest desire and full persuasion that God would *there* bless me: my hope and expectation have not been in vain; for, during Mr. Griffith's sermon, from John xv, 26, my soul was drawn out in ardent longing for that glorious deliverance from all sin, which he so clearly showed to be the privilege of believers, and to be obtained only through faith in Christ. O, it is for this I pant, and without it my soul looks in vain for happiness. This can be found only when the Spirit takes up his abode in the heart. This blessing appears to me so fully expressed from these words of our Lord, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Here the Son of God condescends to show the union to be as complete between him and his obedient people, as subsists between him and his Father. How sweet do I find that portion I this morning selected for meditation out of Romans, where Abraham's faith was counted to him for righteousness, "Being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform." This was the faith acceptable to God. On those words of Him who spake as never man spake, I will now rely: "If a

man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him; and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." O glorious promise! if, indeed, the Trinity thus descends into my heart, the principle of sin, root and branch, will be plucked up. O, come quickly, thou blessed Saviour: thou, who by the angel didst proclaim thyself as *Jesus*, who should save thy people *from* their sins; and who, by becoming their King, and promulgating thy own laws, dost demand obedience on penalty of rejection; thou, who by thy Spirit's influence, hast inspired the ardent desire I feel to be altogether thine; O descend, and never let me breathe without thy influence; nothing less than a constant sense of my interest in thee will satisfy me. Nothing do I so ardently desire as a fresh restoration, not only to thy favour, but to thy image.

I would this day again enter into solemn covenant with thee; again surrender myself in body, soul, and spirit, to thy service. O give me but strength to fulfil all thy will; to obey thee in every jot and tittle of thy word! To be brought into this blessed state I resign my will, my understanding, and affections to thee. Reign supreme, and "Lord of every motion there;" and if ever I swerve from that narrow path on which I have entered, ever again compromise with the world I have renounced, let me feel the goadings of an accusing conscience, and smart beneath the terrors of thy threatening! Lord, thou knowest I fully desire to be thine;

to adorn, by a holy life and consistent conversation, the Gospel I profess. I feel my weakness, and know I have no strength independent of my Saviour! and, for the heavenly wisdom I need, am encouraged to ask of Him who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not. I want *my will* to be brought into subjection to thine; and having surrendered to the great God, I ask thee to mould and subdue it, till every opposing inclination is destroyed. O, for such a view of thy majesty, thy purity, thy mercy, thy love, that I may be swallowed up in the contemplation and triumph of calling *thee my Father* and *my God.*

May 27, 1811.—Yesterday was exceedingly blessed to my soul. I think I hardly ever found such an outpouring of the Spirit under the word. I was truly athirst for God; and when good Mr. Griffith spake to the society alone, after evening service, so pathetic, so earnest was his address, that I shed abundance of tears. May that dear people attend to the things that make for their peace. May the work be *deepened* in their souls!

Let me ask, how his address operated on my own heart? I felt determined in His strength, who is almighty to save, to give myself more unreservedly up to God than ever I did; to press after all the mind that was in Christ Jesus; to be more watchful and more addicted to prayer.

I especially feel the need at this time of watching continually. On a review of the past, I find that *little* things have often quenched the Divine fire of love in my soul.

The indulgence of a wrong temper, or light conversation, or any kind of trifling. As Mr. G. yesterday emphatically observed, "*The Holy Spirit is infinitely delicate;*" how my experience corroborated this! For his *indwelling* in the soul, and unholy propensities, are quite incompatible.

Lord, my hope is in thee; I rest now beneath the shadow of thy wings; screen me in the hour of temptation; make my heart thy dwelling place; and let my union and communion with thee transform my nature, till the very thoughts of my heart are cleansed, and I be made fit to appear before the judgment seat of Christ!

May 28, 1811.—I have this morning found great liberty in prayer; and especially for that deeper work of sanctification I so much need, and long to experience. My morning portion much encourages me to look for it; "Likewise reckon ye yourselves *dead* indeed unto sin, but *alive* unto God." I only *live* when I live to thee. It is only in this ultimatum of my desires that I can look for happiness. Yes, I am in search of *happiness;* that which is to be derived from keeping within the veil, and receiving continually borrowed rays from the uncreated Source of light. What are the effects of the material sun on creation in this lovely season? Its cheering influence imparts life and beauty to all the vegetable world. The bud swells, the *blossom* expands; the effect leads us to the cause.

Let me apply this to the shining of the Sun

of righteousness. While his glorious beams vivify my soul, it must scatter all remaining darkness, and cause all holy and heaven-born tempers to emanate. My light must *shine*, and its rays must be reflected on others. In vain are all pretensions to the enjoyment of God, unless holy fruits be the consequence. *He blesses us that we may be blessings*; and if the light of his countenance be lifted up upon us, the light of our good works will be manifest to others.

O what a lovely thing is religion! what a pure and never-failing spring of happiness!

It was a song worthy of God and of angels when the Deity was about to veil his glory in our humanity, to proclaim, "Peace on earth; good will toward men." O my soul, ever be suspicious when thou art clouded with discontent. Be assured, that distance from God is the cause. He dwells with the poor and contrite, to revive their hearts: all his footsteps are *love*. His name is love. "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him."

June 1, 1811.—After an absence of three years, (supplied by a regular correspondence,) I have again enjoyed the company of my dear friend, Mary Ann; and the friendship which has for four years subsisted between us will receive additional strength from our recent interview. We find indeed but *one* spirit in the glorious pursuit of everlasting happiness; and I believe are equally alive to the desire to press forward, and to drink deeper and deeper into God! But, alas! in many particulars I

find myself far below my dear friend; and the few days I have enjoyed her society have tended much to show me the defective parts of my deportment.

Night of the same day.—This evening I have parted from my lovely friend, after having enjoyed a few hours (in a sweet walk) of the most affectionate and friendly converse. We parted with our hearts more than ever knit together, cemented by the bonds of true religion; and after having, on our knees, mutually commended each other to God, and blessed him for all the happiness and profit our friendship had afforded us, we parted with the full assurance of meeting each other in the abodes of endless bliss. O! they were sweet moments, when we unbosomed our souls to our heavenly Father; and when my dear Mary Ann, with all that piety and sweet simplicity for which she is so conspicuous, poured out her soul in ardent requests for our mutual happiness. To relieve that sadness, which separation from one so truly loved has cast over my mind, I note down the interesting attendants of our adieu. Can I forbear acknowledging to that God, from whom I receive every thing I enjoy, the gratitude I feel for the delights of friendship. To him I owe my friend. To him we both owe that sweet kindred flow of affection, that ardent pursuit of heaven-born joys, which I trust will ever characterize us.

When I take a survey of the countless mercies which encompass me, and find myself so dis-

tinguished by temporal and spiritual good, I feel my deficiency in gratitude and love to thee, thou Source of blessedness.

O stamp upon my soul *all thy image;* and let me daily feel more my obligations, and more fervent love to thee! I want to live nearer to my God, and to enjoy all the happiness he so delights to bestow. The desire thou hast implanted, blessed God, wilt not thou accept? I ask not for temporal good; but I do ask for a deeper acquaintance with thyself, and for longing desires after immortality. Is my only reliance on Jesus the author and finisher of faith? Do I cast myself wholly upon him, convinced of my utter helplessness and his all-sufficiency?

This is the general frame of my heart, thoug too often I feel a want of simplicity in casting myself on his merits alone. I am too apt to connect enjoyment with safety. When happy in his love my evidences are bright; but when unbelief prevails then I do not sufficiently look to him who is still interceding on my behalf; and from whose love nothing can ever separate me but the indulgence of sin. I want an increase of *simple* faith, and of momentary dependence on the charity of Heaven.

I have too frequently omitted ejaculatory and private prayer: I mean *mid-day* engagements. I have too readily allowed myself in excuses for not rising early. O, how long is the catalogue of sins of *omission!* Were I to die this week, what have I left undone which I should

then wish I had performed? Lord, give me wisdom to make this inquiry.

Does my sense of gratitude bear any proportion to the benefit I have already received, and am yet likely to receive from that providential intimacy subsisting between my dearest friend and me? In acknowledging God as the author of my blessings have I duly estimated his goodness in imparting them? Indeed I have not; and am justly condemned for my ingratitude. May none of these things at the hour of death rise up to afflict me!

I am not sufficiently mindful of those innumerable temporal blessings by which I am distinguished.

My cup runs over; and in spirituals and temporals how peculiarly am I favoured!

"Transported with the view, I'm lost,
In wonder, love, and praise."

I feel self-abased in the recollection how cold my love to the souls of others has been. I have suffered opportunities for serious conversation to pass unimproved. In this I am altogether condemned. Lord, forgive me, and awaken in me such a deep concern for their eternal welfare as shall give me incessant and ardent importunity with thee for their salvation.

I am an accountable creature; O Lord, wert thou strict to mark iniquity I could not stand; for even on a review of my sins of omission and commission I am self-condemned, and could not hope for thy clemency were there not an infinite atonement. Lord, I have no excuse

to offer, only my plea is that Jesus died; but I have recorded them, and now deplore them that I may find grace to do so no more; but to exercise more watchfulness, more self-denial, a praying spirit; that being quickened I may every day rise to newness of life, and be a faithful and obedient subject to Jesus my King and my Master, who is the Saviour and Preserver of my soul.

To Miss ———.

I cannot tell you, dearest Mary Ann, how much I regret the transient nature of the pleasure I enjoyed in your company. Fleeting as the moments were, I hope the good effects will be lasting. I find my affections more than ever united to you; and I think I better estimate the value of that friendship for whichI have often blessed God; and feel assured that our union with all the redeemed will be eternal.

I anticipate the continuation of our correspondence with renewed pleasure; and trust increasing advantage will be the result; and as we are now decided candidates for an immortal crown, so I hope our warfare will be continual; and that we shall have in the course of our spiritual contest much of that peace which passeth understanding.

I feel at this time the blessedness of calling God my Father; and have an inward peace which is indescribable. O my dear Mary Ann, the more I drink of the fountain of living waters the more I feel my thirst abate for earth-

born joys: the more I experience of religion the more I find its adaptation to my every want.

To excite each other to these immortal hopes and enjoyments shall be our aim by our letters and prayers; and as the time approaches for our entrance on those new and important engagements which we both have in prospect, I trust our application to the all-sufficient source of strength and wisdom will be in proportion to our need; that every new and relative duty may be filled up in the fear of God; that we may shine as lights in the world, and exemplify the spirit of our Lord and Master.

Farewell, my much loved and invaluable friend. In all your future trials may you find support by looking upward, and looking forward: it will be but for a little—

Yours truly, and affectionately,

MARY HANSON.

DIARY.

June, 15, 1811.—I think I never felt more powerfully than I have the last week the sensation of *gratitude*. A retrospect of my *past* life, a sense of the countless blessings by which I am at present surrounded, and my happy prospects of the *future;* all have constrained me to call on my soul, and all that is within me, to bless His holy name. I have really been led to think no one ever had such peculiar motives for gratitude; and yet I never felt the want of it more. In heaven this *noble*

principle will have full and uninterrupted exercise: when the soul, released from its cumbrous clay, will have every faculty in full and perfect action. The thought of heaven, how does it inspire me with joy; with courage to fight manfully every enemy that would oppose my progress thither.

Regeneration! Yes, it is so indeed. A new life is imparted to the soul that lays hold of religion. Desires, hopes, aims, taste, all undergo a complete change. I bless God that in all these particulars I can trace a *new principle* to what formerly influenced me. God being the centre of my happiness, the circle of my enjoyments is unlimited; and those desires after God, which nothing short of *eternity* can satisfy, must emanate from the infinite and eternal Source of all mind.

"O love Divine, how sweet thou art,
When shall I find my longing heart
All taken up by thee."

"Our blessings brighten as they take their flight."

As every day brings me nearer to the time when I must leave this loved spot, I view its receding beauties with considerable emotion. The culture of my flowers which so often engaged my attention; their lovely hues that always charmed me, and led me to trace His hand "whose sun exalts, whose breath perfumes, whose Spirit paints." Sweet warblers of the grove, with whose hymns of praise my heart has so often been in unison, I must leave you all: thankful

I feel for the pure delights ye have afforded me, for the honeyed store of enjoyment the works of God have imparted; and for being enabled to practise the happy art of deriving my reflections from the objects that surrounded me. The book of nature I have with delight perused to a considerable degree: in a little time I must quit this volume; and by my removed residence to London, shall be called upon, in a more enlarged and frequent manner, to study God in the volumes of providence and grace. I cannot then repine: nay, I will even believe that that Being who so clearly marks out my path has greater enjoyments and usefulness in store for me than I ever had; and this I shall experience if led to a deeper acquaintance with him, and to a more confirmed vigour in the pursuit of holiness.

I shall immediately have a sweet *immortal plant* to cultivate and rear for the paradise of God.* By my own *example*, *spirit*, and *conduct*, by my unwearied instruction, aided by the Holy Spirit, I trust I shall be enabled to direct the eye and attention of that sweet creature to those abodes of glory on which her dear, though unknown parent has entered. I feel in prospect its importance; but to Him who is all-sufficient I will apply for wisdom and grace, that my preconceived notions of education (which I think have been well considered and digested) may be put into full effect.

* Mr. C.'s child by his former wife.

Religion must be interwoven in all, in every part; so that the mind may be fully impressed that the object of all is to prepare her here to be *useful* and *happy*, and *to live in the enjoyment of God for ever.*

June 22, 1811.—Through the last week I think I have suffered my *mind* to be too much occupied with domestic engagements. They would have been *performed* equally well had my thoughts been less engrossed by the *occupation.* I feel I have lost strength by it; and this is a *point of danger* to which I shall hereafter *be much more exposed.* A temptation to evil may be concealed amid our most lawful engagements; and a constant recurrence to that Being who has grace and wisdom to impart to all, in all circumstances, is indeed a duty and a privilege.

O that spirituality of mind were more a *habit* than it is with me! I feel a want of more constant union and communion with God. He gives us grace that we may use it; we must be co-workers with him. This my daily experience shows me. I more and more feel the need of a *simple* dependence on Jesus. I do not sufficiently look to him in every dealing of providence and grace. But I desire it earnestly, and to walk *by faith in him.*

July 6, 1811.—In expectation of receiving on the morrow the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper, I devoted some time this evening for the more immediate contemplation of it; and endeavoured to enter into an examination of the

state of my heart toward God. I was much edified and assisted in reading parts of Thomas à Kempis; and found my soul very much drawn out toward God in prayer. The intercourse was open, and I felt the indescribable blessedness of viewing my blessed Redeemer as having *suffered*, and now interceding on *my* behalf. I trust, indeed, it is a foretaste of the more abundant satisfaction I shall find on the morrow, at the blessed feast of love. O that at the table of my Lord, he may

> "Answer the gracious end in me
> For which his precious life was given;
> Redeem from all iniquity,
> Restore, and make me meet for heaven!"

O that the root of *unbelief*, which keeps me so long from this blessing, may there receive its death-wound. That *there* my Saviour's image may be stamped on my soul; there may I find his precious death effectual for the removal of all his enemies—nay, their utter destruction.

I cannot partake of the dying memorials of my Redeemer's love without finding fresh and lively incentives to consecrate myself anew to his service. O, if it be possible, I would do it more unreservedly than I ever did. O may my whole soul be fully engaged in this all-important surrender; and may the *last* sacrament I may ever *receive here* be the *best*. May I, in time to come, recur to it as a season when "His banner over me was love;" when I sat under his shadow with great delight, exulting in

the conviction "that my Beloved is mine, and I am his."

July 7, 1811.—Upon the whole, I have found the services of this day very profitable; and before the morning service found great liberty and delight in my supplications at the throne of grace. At the table of the Lord I experienced sweet peace in making a fresh surrender of my soul to Jesus. I am indeed athirst for more love; and long to prove all the power of his death in saving me from inward sin. I want deliverance from a certain quickness in my disposition, which makes me so alive to the slightest imputation from others on my past or present conduct. This implies a great want of humility and lowliness of mind. Had I a deeper acquaintance with myself, I hardly think this disposition of mind would so often harass me. I want to lie lower at the footstool of my Saviour; I want to feel unmoved by offences, and to have my heart glow with the same degree of love toward the offender. When perfected in love this will be the happy disposition of my soul.

O Thou, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, espying the secret springs and motives of my inmost soul, it satisfies me not that my fellow creatures approve and admire my outward deportment: What will *this* approbation avail? It is thine, O God, I need; and unless the very thoughts of my heart are cleansed, the motives and principles of my conduct made pure and upright, without this testimony I am *restless.*

When I have experienced most happiness in thee, it has been when my thoughts have been all put in requisition; all subservient to the glorious hopes and the animating prospects beyond the grave.

When the Comforter takes up his *abode* in my heart, then all will be subdued to my heavenly King.

July 21, 1811.—It is a reflection peculiarly pleasing to my mind, that the still small voice of God allured me into the paths of true religion, amidst the enjoyments of every thing the world afforded; health, friends, and prosperity. Deeply conscious of the incapacity of all these things to impart the peace and happiness for which I thirsted—won by the loveliness of the Gospel, I was enabled, through the operations of Divine grace, to take the Lord for my portion; I was gradually brought to experience the privileges of my charter as a Christian; and, when pardon was spoken to my heart, when peace and joy took place of doubt and fear, then I could say, "He is the altogether lovely," his *paths are peace*.

To the present moment I have never lost the *assurance* I then received, of my adoption into the family of Heaven. It is true, clouds, dark clouds, have often veiled the Sun of righteousness from my eyes; but still I could believe he loved me.

While I possess this blessed hope, no change of outward circumstances, no privation of health or loss of friends, can make me essentially

miserable. Give me but the internal support, the peace of God, surpassing all understanding; then pain will be sweet, and the sting of adversity will be extracted. Repose in Christ and his promises can preserve me unmoved amid the varying calamities of this state of trial. God has not promised the Christian exemption from trial, but he has promised support under it; and has declared his unwillingness to afflict.

It is the hand of love, guided by a tender *father when the probing knife is used.* Well, then, having surrendered myself to God, virtually renouncing my own will, I would, without anxiety, commend myself and all future events into his hands.

In point of suffering, I feel that I have too little resignation, and my own will is much too predominant. Want of faith in God alone makes this fear so full of torment. Having nothing to do with the events of my future life, but to submit to them, sustained by the positive assurance that "all things shall work together for my good," I desire to yield myself up entirely to the Lord, and say, "Not my will, but thine be done."

These reflections have arisen chiefly from the near contemplation of an event to me of the utmost importance. Very soon I shall quit this abode of my infancy and youth; scenes of mirth and folly; scenes too of peace and holy joy. More than ordinarily privileged with books and leisure, for a considerable time, the improvement of my mind, the gratification

of my understanding, was the joy and business of my life: even then I pitied those, who, in the enjoyments of sense alone suffered the season of youth to pass by. This state of mind succeeded a considerable disposition to pursuits of gayety: and, had I been unbridled by education, I should have launched out into all the scenes of gayety so bewitching to the young. Thanks be to God for the restraints thus imposed! As far as I could I proved the pleasures of life, but the omniscience of God then oppressed me.

How powerful are the effects of a religious education! Under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Fry, the latter end of the year 1803, I became broad awake to the importance of eternal things; and for several months was earnest and devout. We left London—the preaching here not congenial; losing sacramental opportunities, religion lost its power; and soon I retained nothing but the name and the exterior. Books then I devoured with avidity, and the midnight hour has often found me in my closet, poring over the page of history, and the discoveries of natural philosophy.

Was I then happy? O no! going farther and farther from God. I often wept when alone, and hardly knew why. Sometimes a sermon roused me; oftener my own reflections brought me to my knees. My little bark was tossed, without a pilot. What a mercy I was not then permitted to set sail on the ocean of life. I was safely harboured under a paternal roof: and though without rudder or compass, the

mischief could not be extensive, because confined. Thus, at a distance from happiness, forgetful of the great end of my being, in positive disobedience to my Maker, I lived, until providentially led to hear the simple, unadorned, yet earnest preaching of the Wesleyan Methodists. The most inferior of their preachers roused and fixed my attention. I lost my critical spirit; no longer thirsted for the flowers of oratory, the elegance of diction; but began to seek and find spiritual food for my hungry soul. I first heard them occasionally, then more frequently, and at length constantly; and after twelve months hearing them, became a member of the society, in March, 1810. Since that period I have sought, and I have found *real happiness* in religion; an effect more particularly the result of our creed; so Scriptural, so Divine! I owe all of happiness to *them* as instruments, to GOD as the source. Glory be to his name!

Happy moments I have here enjoyed; impelled by the influence of Divine love, my soul was on fire for usefulness; to talk and pray with the poor, to aid their necessities, as far as I could, now became, to the utmost of my power, my sweet employ. In self-denial was my joy; love was the spring of my obedience, and all the commands of God were my delight. Blessed be God, this is *still* my experience.

My union with the society introduced me to many very valuable friends in London. In a way most clearly providential *one* is about to remove me from this sphere of long-tried enjoyment.

In a few weeks I shall bid adieu to you all, scenes of pain and of pleasure! My opportunities of usefulness here are about to close. O that I had been more faithful, more active, more earnest!

An important event has indeed attached itself with my union to this society: through it I have acquired the dearest friend I ever had, and live in the heart and affections of one who appears to be fully worthy of mine. I have had daily cause to bless God for it; and believe I shall throughout eternity. No opposition has checked our path; a seeming concurrence of earth and heaven, the final approval of my will, my heart, my judgment. I have the most unbounded confidence in the *piety*, disposition, and *understanding* of my beloved friend; and I have before me every prospect of all that is to be enjoyed in the married life:—

In the following thoughts on domestic order and discipline, there is as much of sound *sense* as of genuine *piety*:—

Aug. 7, 1811.—I hope I have not lived to the present time, without deriving some very important lessons from observation and experience, particularly in domestic life. This is the sphere of a woman's action. It is here that full scope is given for the right use of her understanding, and for the exemplification of true religion. A very important trust is committed to her; and I am inclined to think, that on her, primarily, the happiness as well as good order of a family devolve. Her trials will

chiefly arise from those of her own household; it is therefore of very great importance, that a good and decisive *system* should be first arranged. Let it be fully impressed on the domestics, that such things and such rules you expect will be observed. The fewer deviations, the more *their* comfort as well as that of their superiors will be preserved. But it is from the breach of good order, the non-performance of things *necessary* and *expected* to be done, that the trials and exercise of temper and patience chiefly arise;—hence the vast importance of self-command. A remark of Epictetus, a heathen moralist, just now occurs to me—"Begin to govern your passions in the smallest things: is your oil spilt," &c, "*submit* with patience, and say to yourself, at this rate do I purchase tranquillity and constancy of mind. Nothing good is acquired without labour. When you call your servant, imagine he may be out of the way, or employed in something you will not have him to do, *but do not make him so great as to have it in his power to give you disturbance.*" Were these the suggestions of a heathen? and shall a Christian, blessed with such a perfect system of morals, called upon to be meek and lowly like his Master; promised strength from above equal to every exigence: shall *he* put himself in the power of every little accident, and by it give his household reason to question the sincerity of his religion? O forbid it, thou ever-present Deity! who at all times takest cognizance of the actions of thy creatures.

Our tempers are chiefly exercised by an opposition to *self-will;* and the more *self-importance* there is in the character, the more frequent, and the greater in degree, will be the trial.

It appears to me well to settle it in the mind, that daily trials may or will arise; trials known to God, and which may greatly tend to promote a spirit of watchfulness and self-acquaintance; and from a proper use of them the Christian temper may become more established. For this end, how needful every morning to pray for special grace to keep me from manifesting any temper contrary to the Gospel, either by hard or unkind speeches, or of suffering trifles wholly to engross that mind which ought supremely to be fixed on heavenly things. The indulgence of evil tempers, "darkens evidences and clouds comforts." Most earnestly do I entreat of God a *complete mastery* over myself, that, as far as I am concerned, my house may be a bethel; that servants and all connected with me may be constrained to admire the blessedness and efficacy of true religion. What importance will then attach to my admonitions! How much greater will their *respect* be for a mistress who has *reason* at her command, and enforces all by a spirit of love.

The Saviour never gave *orders* without providing *arms*, and there is no precept in the blessed Gospel, for the performance of which God is not ready to communicate Divine strength.—Good order and punctuality I consider of vast importance in the right regulation of a family. This will have its foundation in *early rising*, a

thing I hope to accomplish; without it I shall be unable to devote that time, I hope ever to consider a duty, of doing, in various ways, good to my indigent fellow creatures.

There is something very delightful in living to good purpose; to have the prayers and blessings of the *pious poor*; and by kindness and admonition to bring in the way of salvation those that know not God.

How much is implied in living as a Christian; in walking with God!

A letter, of which the following is an extract, was written a short time before her marriage: it is open and honest, and a proper model for all epistles on a similar subject:—

To Mr. John Cooper.

August 7, 1811.

Such a letter, from such a friend, at such a time demands something more than mere verbal acknowledgment. Ere this, my dearest friend, you must have discovered how alive my feelings are to attentions, and the contrary.—Neither apathy nor indifference is at all constitutional with me. Hence the affection you so kindly, so warmly express, will be duly prized, and in *due time* properly returned. Were the happy talent of giving extraordinary pleasure in the epistolary way mine, you should now receive an answer worthy of the affectionate letter before me, which afforded me more pleasure than I choose to express. You have taught me to believe that *silence* is very expressive. In

this way, then, accept and believe me most grateful for the undeviating proofs of your attachment, at once pleasing and to me so invaluable.

As our acquaintance will soon assume a more important and very different aspect, I am unwilling to allow the present opportunity (perhaps the last I shall *in this way* have,) to pass, without telling you of the very great profit I have already derived from our happy intercourse.—The most entire and happy union certainly subsists between us on all subjects. We alike soar, renouncing the world in every sense, as any model for our domestic procedure. "The Bible is our *one* book, and from that pure fountain I trust our streams of happiness will flow."

I cannot but indulge a sweet confidence that that God, who by his providence has brought us to regard each other as we now do, will enable *me* to be *every* thing requisite to your happiness. I have such an entire reliance on that promise, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me;" and, if I may be allowed the expression, have so much spiritual ambition, that what formerly made me shrink as impossible, I can now expect without fear. Faith is omnipotent. By prayer only can we hold converse with the Deity, and thus be changed from glory *into glory*.

Hammersmith, August 10, 1811.

I scarcely know, my dear Miss W——, which of two motives more powerfully influences me in addressing you at this time; the request of

my dear father, or the desire I feel to express the sympathy with which my bosom glows at the affecting picture of distress depicted in your letter to my father. I do, indeed, most affectionately feel for you ; and the only expression I can give of it is to direct your mind to those sources of pure and permanent happiness which remain secure, and must flourish amidst the changes and perpetual vicissitudes of human life.

I cannot allow myself to think that the accident your dear mother has met with, is of itself likely to prove of any serious consequence.—Those effects, pain, &c, you mention, naturally follow such a concussion of the whole frame. I once had a similar accident.

How far the previous weakness of your dear parent may operate against a speedy and entire recovery I know not: my earnest prayer shall be, that a life so invaluable, so much desired, may long be granted to you.

That many years of health, if it be the will of God, may yet be your portion, and that of your amiable mother ; and that the successive afflictions, with which you have been visited, may ultimately prove to you " blessings in disguise." O my dear Miss W——, true religion is, indeed, a powerful charm ; it can do what the philosopher's stone has done fabulously, turn all that it touches into gold. When that veil opaque, which naturally covers our hearts, is thrown aside, we discover a Being of infinite benevolence, who in first giving his Son for our ransom, denies us nothing else, but dips every

seeming painful arrow into love; and *tries* us here, that we may be fitted for the pure and peaceful enjoyment of himself in the world above. Would the *dross* ever be separated from the *gold*, think you, my dear friend, were it merely to lie exposed to the meridian sun?—O no. That genial warmth would leave the gross particles unextracted: in some cases it must be purified seven times in the furnace.—Let us apply this to unclouded prosperity; and take a view of the state of our hearts and hopes, when our expectations beat high with present enjoyments and future prospects. The world, how desirable! That Being who sustains our lives, whose penetrating eye is ever upon us, and who, by mercies momentarily dispensed, lays claim to our love, is perhaps the last remembered. Though we thus forget him, *he remembers us:* earthly props are withdrawn; sickness demands reflection; the sly scythe of time mows down, with unrelenting hand, the objects of our present love; and when thus left to the *solitude* of our hearts, the fascinations of the world sicken and fade from our view. 'Tis then the Father of the fatherless extends his arms to receive his returning child. Read the sweet parable of the prodigal in Luke xv. Let me entreat you, my dear, to *read* and *prize* the book of God. We naturally attach importance to a remedy that has been tried, and proved effectual; especially if the individual who prescribes it has had personal proof of its efficacy. Allow me then, from my experience (a present happy possession) of its value, to urge upon

you to make *religion* the paramount desire of your heart. Life is a bitter draught without it; religion is a purifying, exalting, tranquillizing principle. It makes the yoke of *duty* easy, the burden of care light. In the words of an elegant writer, "It is the knowledge of Him, whom to know is wisdom, whom to fear is rectitude, whom to love is happiness." A sweet epitome of its worth! This is such a darling theme of mine, that I am apt to dwell long upon it; but I could never express the tenth part of the happiness I have found in those ways, which the wise man declares to be paths of peace and pleasantness: but religion to me was merely a system of *restraints* until I obeyed the Divine injunction, and gave God *my heart*: and of course gave up *the world*. For inspiration declares, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him:" and believe me, my dear, a true taste of heaven-born enjoyments gives us an effectual disrelish for the irrational and frothy pleasures of the world.

When we travel round the world within, and hold converse with

——— "a stranger there
Of high descent, and more than mortal rank,
An embryo God, a spark of fire Divine,
Which must burn on for ages, when the sun,
Fair transitory creature of a day,
Has closed his golden eye."——

There are moments when we can rejoice in being endued with immortality, and when we can feel our souls elevated with a view of that *infinite price* paid on the cross by Him "who

wept that we might smile, who bled that we might never die." We must not forget the golden chain let down from heaven to save a sinking world; but avail ourselves of that mysterious mean left open for holding intercourse with the Father of our spirits by *prayer*, the noblest employment of created beings on earth; the elevation of the soul toward its Maker. O that you, my dear friend, in this season of affliction, of painful suspense, may find, in approaching the Saviour of a lost world, that peace and composure, that resignation and acquiescence, which he waits to bestow; for he hath said, "Ask, and *you shall receive; seek*, and you shall find."

As I hope you will have inclination, as well as time, to read a long letter, I shall not apologize for having followed the present dictates of my inclination: I cannot doubt that you will regard the motives pure and affectionate. In any way to alleviate the sorrows and sufferings of my fellow creatures is the *prime luxury* of my life; and to direct their attention toward those sources of happiness I have proved is only a slight return of gratitude to that Being who so peculiarly blesses me. What more shall I say to soothe you? May the mind of your dear parent be supported under her affliction; and when oppressed with pain and weakness, may the everlasting arms be beneath her. By an *interest* in the *Saviour*, may she be raised from the ruins of the fall, and have a glorious hope of happiness beyond the grave. Time is but the infancy of our being; but it is our state of

probation; and therefore consequences of infinite value attach to the present moment; and the words of our incarnate God are, "Verily I say unto you, except ye be born again ye cannot see the kingdom of God."

I hope I have not wearied you, my dear Miss W——, with the subject. I have pressed it the more on your attention from the vein of seriousness so observable in your letter; and knowing it to be the only thing adapted to *satisfy* creatures endued with immortality, I have ventured to dwell largely on the importance of answering the great *end* of our existence. All that I have said is derived from that book which we all receive as inspiration.

My dear mother feels exceedingly for you in your trials. Present our kind remembrances to your dear mother; and believe me to remain,

Yours, very affectionately,

MARY HANSON.

Hammersmith, Aug. 20, 1811.

MY DEAR MISS W.—My last letter was the result of sympathy and condolence, and I hope the progressive amendment of your dear mother's health will justify the present being a congratulatory one. I rejoice with you in the prospect of her restoration, and I trust God will put efficacy in the means used for the establishment of her *general* health.

I am induced to reply to your kind letter now, (for which I thank you,) from the probability that for a considerable time to come a variety of new engagements will fully occupy my mind:

indeed, at the present moment, it is with difficulty I can allow any *scribbling* time; so that should this letter be shorter than yours, you will make every due allowance. It is no trifling circumstance, my dear Miss W——, to be on the point of leaving a home endeared by all the pleasing varieties of childhood and youth; to quit the superintendence of dear parents, &c, &c; to commence new relations and new engagements: both in *retrospect* and *prospect* there is full occupation for the mind.

With me, I must thankfully acknowledge *both* to be tinctured with a pleasing hue. I feel reason to rejoice that the formation of a connection, so *all important*, was not made at an earlier period of my life, when my *feelings* would have been far more consulted than my *judgment:* that I was not permitted hastily to choose a companion, when uninfluenced by religion, I might have selected one destitute of that only bond of *permanent* domestic happiness. That this principle is the only security for its continuance, is my most deliberate judgment, after much reflection and observation. I cannot express to you how endearing is a union of hearts in religion, where mutual hopes and aims are directed toward objects pure, lovely, and permanent; with the animating expectation, that when this mortal shall put on immortality,

"Together both their happy spirits fly,
To scenes where love and bliss immortal reign."

After a most happy intimacy, both epistolary and personal of twelve months, I shall, if God permit, surrender myself to one of the most

amiable of men on Tuesday next; a period I can regard without the least anxiety, because *convinced* of the unerring guidance of Providence, and of the entire suitability of the individual I love.

I should not have said so much to you on this subject, dear Miss W——, but for the desire I feel, that as you possess such pious views, you would never enter on a connection so important, without imploring the guidance and direction of Heaven; and making piety a *first* consideration in *your choice.*

Religion is interwoven with all my hopes and plans of happiness: it is a sweet ingredient in the bitter draught of life; it is a perennial spring in the very centre of the heart:—it is all we need to make us happy here and for ever.

It gives me much pleasure to hear you speak so decidedly of your love and preference of piety, and of your habitual perusal of the word of God. May the Divine Spirit more and more enlighten our minds to comprehend its treasures and estimate its worth.

I expect to return from Wales in about three weeks, when I shall be happy to hear from you. By that time I hope your good mother will be restored to a more decisive state of health. Time will not allow me to enlarge:- you will accept the intention, and believe me to remain, your very affectionate, MARY HANSON.

Shortly before her marriage her mind was more than ever impressed with the importance of the step she was about to take; with the new

situation to which she thought herself so evidently called by Divine Providence; with the various relations in which she must shortly stand, and the duties which, in each of those relations, she must conscientiously discharge. Her feelings, views, and reflections, on these subjects, are well expressed in the following passages:—

August 8, 1811.—It is the peculiar privilege of the mind, properly influenced by the spirit of religion, to extract good from apparent evil; and from the chequered circumstances of life, to view the overruling and kind intentions of a God of love, in every thing.

A review of the past inspires confidence in the future.

When I take a survey of my past life, from the period reason began to operate, I can trace the guidance of an almighty hand; and can adore that wisdom and love which have made even seeming hinderances a real help to the knowledge of himself.

All my domestic trials, the moral school in which I have been disciplined, will, I hope, prove of continual benefit to me in future life.

By being accustomed to have my stubborn will and inclinations crossed, my motives questioned, and my favourite schemes thwarted, a considerable measure of that self-will and self-importance, so natural to me, has received a powerful check; and as I shall shortly, with the permission of Heaven, breathe in an atmos-

phere the most congenial to the sensibilities of my nature, I trust I shall duly prize and affectionately return them.

I feel the advantage of what I have suffered: I can bear opposition; and the natural independence of my mind, as far as it has been extravagant, has been thus much subdued.

It is probable, if I had been allowed time for the attainment of knowledge, in reading, &c, my inclination would have been less ardent for it; nor should I have accustomed myself so fully to employ every moment. I have learned to enjoy solitude: a love of books first inspired this; and afterward, a recollection of the little stores I had laid up in my mind, tended exceedingly to make me enjoy *my own company.* An important acquisition this. I have never known what *ennui* means, from my own experience. I have been taught too, to consider religion as nothing worth, unless its benign influences be shed on domestic life, by rectifying the tempers, and "making the crooked paths of nature even." We must "by *actions* show our sins forgiven."

The restoration of the lost image of God, can mean nothing less than the implantation of the meek and lowly mind of Jesus.

I find too, that it is profitable to give up one's own will in little things; to avoid pertinacity, and rather yield, though unconvinced, than rouse in the opponent those evil passions of pride and malevolence, so baneful in their consequences.

Punctuality in family arrangements is of vast importance; properly to divide time, and to be diligent in whatever you are about. Example is far more powerful than precept. Enforce nothing in your family, if it be a sacrifice you are not willing to make yourself. It is a most pleasing consideration, that the dear friend, with whom I hope to spend the residue of my days, on all these subjects thinks with me; with this difference, with him it has long been practice; with me, *at present*, it is little more than theory.

Aug. 17, 1811.—How does the prospect of witnessing and manifesting the influential principle of religion in domestic life cheer my heart and brighten my prospects? Under the roof of my dearest friend I feel assured I shall perpetually breathe an atmosphere congenial to my wishes. *Peace* is an invaluable possession, and *most scrupulous* shall I ever feel for its *preservation*.

"The spirit, like a peaceful dove, flies from the haunts of noise and strife." How would it pain my heart, could I believe myself capable, or disposed to render, by intentional or unintentional remarks, one member of my family a prey to an hour's grief. I trust it will be my continual aim, by the help of God, to make all happy around me, and to manifest the real spirit of piety in every transaction of my life.

All I have learned in the schools of reading and experience, must there be brought into action. Mental accomplishments avail little indeed, unless they regulate the heart, and cause the benefit to be more *felt* than *seen*. I must

not *display*, but *act;* love, and be beloved. There must be a *sentry* at my heart, that must be kept; for out of *it* proceeds all that tends to disquietude. I must sacrifice in little things; beware of pertinacity; in short, beware of every thing that shall cause the slightest interruption of that peace, which to me appears so highly desirable, and which cannot be sufficiently prized.

Aug. 21, 1811.—I feel thankful that I did not, at an earlier period of my life, enter into the important engagements near at hand. Such an occurrence would have deprived me of the many invaluable opportunities I had of laying in a store of useful knowledge, both by reading and observation. I trust that now, my judgment is sufficiently matured to justify the desire, and hope I have, that the new and important relations on which I shall enter will be filled with that propriety which is the result of a *well regulated mind.* "As in the superintendence of the universe, wisdom is seen in its *effects*, and as they proceed with beautiful regularity, not of chance, but by design; so that management which seems the most easy, is commonly the consequence of the *best* concerted plan; and a well concerted plan is seldom the offspring of an ordinary mind. A *sound economy* is a sound understanding brought into action. The more a woman's judgment is rectified, the more accurate views she will take of the station she is born to fill; and the more readily will she accommodate herself to it." These remarks of my favourite author I appropriate to myself.

I feel their force, and wish to act upon them. I shall indeed have read and thought in vain, unless I fill up the *domestic circle* with more propriety and usefulness than those who have either wanted time or inclination for the same rational pursuits. What a happiness is the assurance, that the intended partner of my life entertains the same views, and will help me by his counsel and advice to fulfil my plans and intentions; and, above all, that God will condescend to assist me by his grace, to act in all things as becomes the character of a Christian.

Sunday, Aug. 25, 1811.—I would adore and magnify thy holy name, most holy God and heavenly Father, for the countless mercies bestowed upon me beneath this parental roof. Richly endowed with the gifts of Providence, and the better blessings of thy grace, I have been long called upon by love and gratitude wholly to devote myself to thy service. Lord, thou knowest how sincerely and how frequently I have done this. It is my daily privilege to live momentarily on the charity of Heaven;—the blessed dependence of true believers. Thou art *all sufficient;* therefore I can now look up and expect the blessing I so peculiarly need at this time. In thy fear, O God, shall I enter on the solemn engagements of Tuesday next. O condescend *there* to meet us; and at the sacred altar do thou manifest thyself to our souls. In the days of thy incarnation thou didst honour the *institution* with thy Divine presence; and though withdrawn from our bodily eyes, yet thou hast still immediate access to all spirits.

Dearest Redeemer! wilt thou not bless thy *children?* Wilt thou not speak sweet peace to those who pant for no other joys than those which flow from *thee? Thou wilt:* past experience encourages me to trust thee. O that every good and desirable end may be accomplished by this providence.

May we live, blessings approved of Heaven: epistles known and read of all men; lights of the world; and to thy name shall be all the glory.

Here I close my Hammersmith journal, with sentiments of gratitude to God. O may the new era of my life, at hand, abundantly farther my immortal interests; and to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be endless praises. Amen, and amen!

M. H.

Miss Hanson's marriage with Mr. Cooper took place, according to appointment, on August 27, 1811, with the most favourable auspices, and, humanly speaking, with the promise of every blessing, spiritual and temporal. That the same principle actuated her heart and her conduct *after* marriage as before it, is well known to all who had the privilege of her acquaintance, and particularly from the subsequent passages in her journal. One thing it may be necessary to remark, that owing to the general indisposition under which she laboured after her marriage, and which to some is the natural

consequence of such a state, she suffered frequent depression of spirits; and this caused her to speak less favourably of her religious state than she might have done:—she was shortly to become a *mother*, and had to tread, to her, an unbeaten path. Hence she was often incapable of discerning between a state of great nervous depression, a frequent consequence of a state of pregnancy, and spiritual declension: her inexperience sometimes led her to form wrong conclusions. That she suffered much from the former, both in body and mind, her friends saw with deep concern: but they anticipated the pleasing hope, that the hour was continually approaching in which her wonted vigour of body and energy of mind would be restored; and *experience* fortify her against suffering so keenly in future, from undue apprehensions of her real state. That she had suffered no loss in her soul; that her bow continued in unabated strength; that her heart was increasingly right with God; and that in proportion to her strength she was as diligent, yea, more abundant in all the means of grace, in the work of faith, patience of hope, and labours of love, after her marriage as before it, was easily marked by her spiritual instructers, and most obvious to the whole circle of her religious acquaintance. The poor and the distressed, for whom, with incessant

diligence, she laboured till she died, can most forcibly tell the tale of her benevolent exertions; for their sakes she often forgot herself,—ever feeling, that in all situations of life, and in all circumstances of health, she was called to glorify God, by *doing good to man.* It has been judged necessary to make these observations, lest from the *manner* in which she expresses herself in some parts of the succeeding journal, the inexperienced or unthinking might be led to suppose that her spiritual state was less prosperous *after* her marriage; whereas the *reverse* might, in all probability, be most safely maintained, as her last days, and particularly her last hours, appear so abundantly to demonstrate.

Knighton, Sept. 7, 1811.—Since I last wrote the most important event of human life has been ratified, I trust, in heaven, as well as upon earth. We reached this place* on Saturday evening, August 31.

I am truly happy with this dear family; received with such uncommon affection; the witness of so much piety; so much domestic concord; my mercies are without number.

Sunday, Sept. 1, 1811.—At nine we went to the Methodist chapel here; heard Mr. R. from "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits which he hath done unto me." At

* The residence of Mr. C.'s father.

eleven went to church, heard Mr. Morgan Evans, from, "And Enoch walked with God," &c. I was much pleased with the simplicity of the preacher, and his views of the subject. At six heard Mr. Radford, at chapel. After the evening service, I and my dear husband had the great privilege of receiving the memorials of our Redeemer's love; we found it a most profitable and delightful season to our souls, and were not a little thankful in having so early an opportunity after our union, of thus renewing our covenant with God.

London, Sept. 29, 1811.—We returned home on the 20th instant, since which time I have been so fully engaged that I have found no time to make any little record of the various blessings I am now continually receiving. "Peace, harmony, and love, the richest bounty of indulgent Heaven," *are ours.* Happy in God and in each other, we feel our every breath should be praise. I wish, indeed, to evidence true *devotion*, by an unreserved consecration of all my powers and faculties to the service of my Master in heaven. I feel that as a Christian I am not to live to myself; nor am I to confine all my exertions to my own family. They have the first claim; but am I not called upon to administer to the necessitous, and in various ways impart the blessings so profusely bestowed upon me?

I have been much blessed every Sabbath since our marriage. How profitable is the Lord's day, when private intercourse tends to *confirm* the benefit received from public instruction;

when nothing interrupts the sacred harmony which ought to pervade the mind of the Christian.

Oct. 29, 1811.—Although supremely blessed with every earthly enjoyment, yet have I, from various exercises of mind throughout the past month, been led to see the emptiness of every *mere* temporal good. For some days comfort was withheld; and I felt a painful void at the absence of my heavenly Father. In this state I was frequently led to feel the insufficiency of every thing but God to make me happy. In searching for the cause, I found that my private devotions had been more hurried than usual; and that the intrusion of domestic concerns was allowed to encroach upon the time set apart for secret converse with God. As a consequence of this, perhaps I did not so set the Lord before me as to walk with him. Thus the Spirit of God was grieved, and my soul brought into heaviness through manifold temptations.

All this I deplored to Mrs. C. at my class, on the 21st. Her sensible admonitions were made truly profitable to me, and I returned home determined to seek till I found, once more, *sensible* peace with God. In a considerable degree it has been mercifully restored to me. [*See the remarks in* p. 213.]

Nov. 9, 1811.—How necessary is it that God should remind us of the dissolving nature of our earthly tabernacle. When *pain* and *languor* seize the body, then I practically feel the insufficiency of all the temporal good I enjoy to make me happy. I regard every memento

of this sort as mercifully designed to wean my affections from the creature, and to make me feel that *rest* can only be found in heaven—in God.

Since my marriage I have certainly had a very large increase of temporal peace and happiness; but that I may not be exalted above measure, my heavenly Father has mingled in this cup of sweets a few unsavoury ingredients. My health has been far less uninterrupted than before.

"Choice befits not our condition,
Acquiescence is the best."

If the Lord but visit me with the light of his countenance, and make the season of indisposition a time for Divine communications, how cheerfully will I embrace all he appoints. I am sure he does all in love: and as I cannot let go the confidence I have that he is my Father; so I believe he will pitifully weigh whatever chastisements he sees fit to exercise me with. I bless God I feel superior to the influence of earthly baits to make me happy.

Dec. 7, 1811.—Am I making progress in the Divine life? In answer to this inquiry, I must pause and reflect. I find my desires after full sanctification, and feel the necessity of it, as much as ever I did; and though frequently cast down by my want of *life* in devotion, still I thirst after the living God, and desire a joyful sense of his presence, far more than any thing this world has to present. I have had to contend for the *last two months, with almost continual pain and weakness of body.* This is indeed

quite a *new* trial to me, (health almost uninterrupted having heretofore been my portion,) and has tended very much to depress my spirits; and from the close union between body and soul, has perhaps caused much of the darkness I have mourned. Though a trying and unexpected appointment, I feel quite sure that *wisdom* and *love* are conspicuous in it. Were it not for this alloy, I should have nothing to prove to me that this is a state of discipline. Blessed in every other way, my hold of God, as the only satisfying portion would be difficult indeed. I trust I have felt nothing like a disposition to murmur. *As every month will bring me nearer to that important and trying event of which I have always had so uncommon a dread, and once such dismal forebodings,* I trust the grace of God will be imparted more abundantly; and that as I shall need, *so* I shall have imparted an increase of *faith* to trust Him who has promised to hear and answer in the day of trouble.

Jan. 19, 1812.—What abundant reason have I to bless and magnify the name of the Lord, that he has not withdrawn the refreshing influences of his Holy Spirit from my soul; and although my devotedness to him, and love to his name, have borne no proportion to his benefits toward me; yet still he quickens me, and has of late in an abundant measure, caused me to hunger and thirst after his righteousness. On the last day of the year I was much depressed in mind; and on self-examination found very great cause for deep humiliation before him; especially during some of the latter months.

God had multiplied in rich abundance my means of grace, of spiritual improvement, and temporal enjoyment; and yet, alas! I had been in danger of ungratefully resting more in the gift than the Giver. Deeply convinced of my ingratitude, after spending some time in prayer with my beloved husband, for the quickening influences of God's Spirit, we went to the watch-night at Queen-street chapel, where God so blessed the service, and in particular Dr. Clarke's sermon, that I left my burden behind me, and found liberty afresh to give myself up to God. From that period I have felt myself like *a new creature*. God has been near to me in prayer, and his Spirit has rendered effectual every means of grace.

On the 4th, I went to Hammersmith; and again found waiting upon God, in my favourite chapel there, very good and refreshing. In the afternoon the covenant was renewed, in which I found great liberty and sweetness. At the Lord's table my vows received a double confirmation. To be altogether the Lord's, to walk closely with him, and to strive to follow him in all things, has been, and is now, through Divine assistance, my firm purpose and intention. I have been of late deeply convinced of my own insufficiency; and if I remain steadfast in my present purposes, I am sensible it must be by the power of God through Jesus Christ alone. At present I find much peace, and power to cast all my care upon him: and am led very earnestly to entreat God that he will sanctify the happy union which has taken place

during the past year; and that he will make my dear husband more abundantly instrumental to my good, and me to his. I must watch and pray continually.

The mercies of God, which so richly encompass me, "*are trials, not rewards,*" and I find myself more in danger of growing careless, from the *profusion* of his gifts, than I perhaps should do were they imparted with a more sparing hand. By the mercies of God, then, let me be constrained to present my body and soul, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable in his sight. Should these benefits be misimproved or slighted, may I not justly fear their being withdrawn or diminished? O, thou heavenly benefactor, who hast so peculiarly distinguished me with thy benefits, let me, by thy grace, be as eminently distinguished for my faith, love, humility, and zeal for thy service! Help me to live to thee; that to please thee in all things may be my habitual aim, and my never-failing spring of comfort. I dare not ask at thy hands either comforts or crosses; but I do ask to have no will but thine; and to have the features of my dear Redeemer more and more impressed, in living characters, on my heart. O let me know what it is to have a constantly *indwelling God!*

March 11, 1812.—My religious experience has of late been very variable. To sit loose to the world, is a difficult, though necessary duty. I feel without it I cannot make progress in Divine things, nor enjoy the peace which passeth understanding: and without this, all my other

enjoyments are nugatory and void. O Lord, quicken thou my soul. Rich as I am in worldly blessings, without thy love I am poor and destitute indeed. My late experience has led me more than ever to feel my own utter insufficiency without the constant aid of the Spirit of God. God has visited me with much bodily pain and debility. I hear his voice in it, and am fully persuaded it is a visit of mercy. But is it yet sanctified? alas! not as it should, nor as it might have been. A review of this, on the last Sabbath, caused me brokenness of spirit. Weary and heavy-laden I went to the Lord, and found myself much relieved and encouraged to fight against these opposers of my spiritual life. I must not live at a distance from the supreme Good. In times past I have *partaken* of the heavenly manna, and drank of the *fountain* of life freely; and it is still open. O that I may now exercise faith on my Lord and Saviour, and seek for grace every moment, that every evil tendency may be quelled as it rises! [*See the remarks in p.* 213.]

I am all need and helplessness; yet I desire nothing so much as the removal of whatever tends to separate me from my heavenly Father. My marriage too lays me under increasing obligations to devote myself to God, who has bestowed upon me the best earthly blessing. I am called to new duties, which require peculiar grace properly to discharge them. O Lord, I will renew my dedication to thy service. Baptize me afresh with thy Holy Spirit, and sanctify *bodily affliction*. O may it be the *one*

desire of my soul to gain more and more of the Divine image, and to be increasing in holiness and meetness for the eternal world!

My present circumstances ought certainly to make me familiar with death and its consequences. *I know not that I shall survive the trying hour of childbirth:* at any rate, I shall then especially need the supports and comforts of true religion, and the presence of God, which to some he so mercifully imparts at that awful period. O that I may now be found faithful to the grace given!

April 26, 1812.—I have devoted some hours of this sacred day to a serious examination of the state of my heart before God, and have found cause enough to be deeply humbled and abased, on the review of the little improvement I have made of the numerous advantages I enjoy.

The hour of trial is with me fast approaching, in which I shall have especial need of the presence of my heavenly Father, to give me patience to bear suffering, and to resign myself wholly to his disposal. The veil which separates me from the eternal world may be soon drawn aside. O that I may be very careful rightly to improve the few remaining weeks previously to my confinement, in more frequent approaches to a throne of grace; that I may enjoy sweet communion with the Father of my spirit! May I study more attentively the blessed word of God, that its promises may be the support of my mind—the food of my soul!

Every page of the preceding work has been gradually preparing the reader for the solemn issue! In a short time after she wrote the above, which is the end of her diary, this excellent woman passed triumphantly through the valley of the shadow of death, which she appears to have so long anticipated. The forebodings of her own mind tended much to unnerve her already deeply depressed frame; and caused her to fall a readier victim to death. The following account of her last moments has been drawn up by Mr. Cooper:—

For several weeks before the confinement of my dear wife, she seemed to enjoy the public means of grace, as well as family worship, in a more than ordinary degree.

The day before her confinement, viz. Sunday, June 14th, she was very unwell, and could not attend public worship in the morning; but being considerably better in the evening, we went to St. Mary Woolnoth, to hear our esteemed friend, Mr. Pratt. She very much enjoyed this opportunity; and on our return home we spent about three quarters of an hour together in mutual prayer and singing several hymns: we then called our family to prayer. Just before retiring to rest, she said, that although she had not been able to attend the house of God in the morning, her soul had been greatly refreshed throughout the day.

The following morning, June 15, she was

sensible that the time of trial was approaching. She was very cheerful, and several times expressed her confidence that God would be with her and support her. A little after midnight she was safely delivered of a fine boy: there was nothing attending the labour to give any ground of alarm; and through the whole of Tuesday she was as well as could be expected; but in the evening dangerous symptoms appeared. The best medical advice was obtained as soon as possible; but from this night she thought she should not recover: she said to the nurse, "I shall die;" who replied, "If it should be the will of God, I hope you are not afraid of death." She answered, "O no!" On Sunday morning she altered so much for the worse, that scarcely any hope remained. As the strictest injunctions were laid upon us by the physicians to keep her as quiet as possible, I had very little conversation with her after her confinement; but she appeared to be in a comfortable and resigned state.

On Monday morning, June 22, perceiving there was no human probability of her recovery, I thought it my duty to inquire the state of her mind; and after praying with her, (in every petition she heartily joined,) I said, "What a mercy it is my love, that we have a God to look to in all circumstances." "Yes," she replied, "and *I have not far to go: he is very near to me.*" I said, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble: do you find him so?" She answered, "Yes, I do."—

At another time she said, "*I am very happy; I have no fear.*" I asked, "Is Christ precious to you? do you find him near?" She said, "Yes, very near to bless: he says to me, *I am thine, and thou art mine.*"

Having left the room, in a short time she said to my sister Mary, "Tell my dear husband to come here." When I went she said again, "*I am very happy.*" "What makes you happy?" "My Jesus," she replied, and then repeated,

"This life's a dream, an empty show,
But that bright world to which I go
Hath joys substantial and sincere;
When shall I wake and find me there?"

"Jesus is the rock of ages; he is my rock. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name." When the nurse inquired if she recollected a psalm she had been repeating, she immediately said, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my heart; of whom shall I be afraid?"

When I returned I found her in the same happy state of mind, saying, "*Glory be to God in the highest: glory be to God in the highest: I have experienced a glorious elevation of mind! It is all over.*" Afterward, to my sister she said, "O Mary, can we ever doubt such a Saviour?" and added, "Come unto me all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul!" and then turning to her sister, said, "*You* can praise God; cannot you, Mary?"

She was continually repeating the promises

of God, and observed, "What a promise-keeping God we have! Be not faithless, but believing." When her sister inquired if she found the Lord to be her refuge and strength in this time of need, she answered with much fervency, "O yes!" and then putting her hands together, and fixing her eyes upward, she said, "Clap your hands, all ye people; come and let us exalt his name together." She then began to pray in great earnestness, often saying, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." She afterward repeated some lines from the hymns of Dr. Watts, among which the following were nearly the last words she uttered:—

"My flesh shall slumber in the ground,
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound;
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,
And in my Saviour's image rise."

She was then seized with that convulsion which deprived her of her senses; and in a little time her happy spirit, freed from its earthly tabernacle, ascended to that Saviour in whom she believed, and in communion with whom, for several years of her life, her chief happiness consisted.

She fell asleep in Jesus, on Monday, June 22, 1812, at a quarter past two in the afternoon, in the 26th year of her age.

A few extracts from Mrs. Cooper's letters to her religious correspondents will interest the reader. They argue, as her other writings do, an enlightened and well-cultivated mind, as well as a friendly and pious heart. Some of those

extracts which are inscribed to Miss M. were written by Miss H. while she was under deep concern relative to her intended matrimonial connection, and some others, immediately after. She saw the absolute necessity of having a *decidedly religious companion*, if any, to accompany her in the path of religion. She had seen, and she had heard, that those young persons who had taken up the cross of Christ, and afterward married irreligious, or not *thoroughly decided religious characters*, either "turned back to perdition, or had a cross the most afflictive to bear throughout life." The advices and directions in these letters are too excellent to be slightly regarded; and it may be hoped have had their due influence on the person to whom they were addressed; nor can any to whom they may be applicable consult them without profit:—

Hammersmith, July 22, 1811.

My Dear Miss M.—Various and pressing engagements have prevented me from earlier assuring you of the pleasure your kind letter (which I regard as the commencement of our correspondence) afforded me. As I gave your reasons for delay their full weight, I am inclined to transpose the words of Pope, and say, "The mercy I to you have shown, that mercy show to me." I have certainly found epistolary communications one of the sweets of celibacy; and

although on the verge of quitting it, with its many advantages, do not despair of finding, amid the more multiplied engagements of domestic life, time to remember, in this way, you, my dear friend, and some others, who have long had a claim on my friendship. Common maxims, and those which guide people ordinarily, are no standard for me; and the too frequent result of marriage, that of contracting the heart, chilling the affections, and confining one's exertions merely to the precincts of a fireside and a family, are unenviable consequences; and into those I hope to be in no danger of falling. To avoid it, I am fully aware of the necessity of redeeming time, and acting on a *digested* plan, that hours and days may not succeed each other, without bearing on their wings, at least, some essays to do good. Our correspondence, my dear friend, I am disposed to hope will be somewhat productive of this disposition; and as we are both alive to the importance and luxury of exercising our talents and influence in *a good cause*, so I trust we shall have freedom and sincerity enough to suggest to each other whatever may prove of personal or relative advantage. Should I insensibly slide into *matrimonial* supineness, and myself become a prey to the inactivity I so often see and so much deplore in others, you, dear Miss M., must rouse me, and tell me of the enjoyment of revolving round a larger orbit of usefulness.—When it first was known among my friends that I was turning my thoughts toward *Methodism*, one of them used jocosely to

tell me, my religion was "up and be doing." A part of it certainly is. It is this spirit which benefits the world; and our Lord and Master, in his errand of benevolence—in his seeking continual occasions of doing good, has left us an example, which, in our degree, it is our duty and interest to follow. Thus did the Star of Jacob pierce through the dark clouds of poverty and reproach; and by the lustre of his deeds proclaim the divinity of his nature. He shall be our pattern and our guide. We will lose sight of the world, and seek after a growing resemblance to the bright and morning Star, that we may be lucid gems in his crown for ever. I cannot but reflect, with a degree of astonishment, on the early and strict discipline you exercised over your heart. You early manifested a taste for that true wisdom, of which the poet speaks,

"Man, know thyself, all wisdom centres here."

You were then under the bondage of self-denial. Now you know the omnipotent power of Divine love, which can make even self-denial a joy! No obedience will be lasting but that which flows from this heaven-born principle: it is this alone which makes the service of God perfect freedom. It is this which reconciles the paradoxes in our religion,—"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing,—as poor, yet making many rich, —as having nothing, yet possessing all things." I sensibly feel, my dear Miss M., your candour in giving me such an insight into your heart.—If the portrait were faithful, it was not a flattering one; but that new nature we are called to

put on—that light of life it is our privilege to walk in, will, I trust, effect an entire revolution of our habits, principles, and pursuits ; and our memorandum book, to the glory of Divine grace, will record a happy change, from the service of the world to the service of God.—You have sweetly described the change, my dear friend : I rejoice with you. O guard the sacred fire, and do not let it evaporate and extinguish, by distracting its source. Nothing can lead to God which has not proceeded from him. We are naturally averse from him, and every thing within us opposes the operation of those fruits of the Spirit, which it has lately been your happiness to testify. We are transitory creatures of a day. God addresses us as such, and warns us against anxious care for the morrow. Therefore, it is your privilege and mine to live a life of *momentary* dependence on the charity of Heaven ; that we may continually be fed with the bread and water of life. For want of this, how much I have lost ! Such a proneness to look *forward*, without faith ; a sad species of unbelief. "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever." His hands of love and mercy are ever spread out in our behalf.

To Miss M.

August 17, 1811.

My Dear Friend,—Circumstances have hitherto proved rather unfavourable to the cultivation both of our epistolary and personal intercourse. The balance is certainly against *me* ; and if your candour toward a friend keeps at all pace with it toward *yourself*, you will, in

consideration of pressing and important engagements, indemnify me from any intentional or avoidable neglect.

It is no trifling thing, dear Miss M., to be on the verge of quitting scenes endeared by all the varieties of youthful experience, the residence of one's whole life. Parents, the instruments of those comforts, and friends knit to my heart by the bonds of Christian love. Those things afford no inconsiderable exercise for the mind. The change, though important, is pleasing, when viewed as the result of that guidance, promised to those who acknowledge God in their ways. There is a *prospective* happiness of being united *in the Lord*, quite inconceivable to those who have never experienced it. This remark I make *for you*, my dear friend, that you may guard your heart and affections, till that heavenly Parent, who has so narrowly and tenderly watched over you for good, shall clearly point out the path for your future life. Confidence in him is both a duty and a privilege.

By way of apology only, have I devoted one page to a subject, not at all interesting to you judging you by myself in former times. The inference I draw, as it regards *us*, is this:—that in the course of another month, the result of all my present bustle will afford me frequent opportunities of enjoying your society, and of interchanging that oneness of object we have in view; to me a very pleasing anticipation; and in conjunction with yourself, our very dear friends at ——, to whom I present *my love*. I beg one proof of its reciprocity, viz. a remem-

brance of me at a throne of grace on the 27th *instant.* Will you, my dear friend, give this kind expression also of your friendship?

And now I will endeavour to answer your kind and acceptable letter. The dearest friends I have, have a property in their disposition I rather think not natural to me, *reserve:* it having proved no obstruction, in those cases, to love and friendship, I was not at all disposed unfavourably to regard the same disposition which I certainly noticed in you, in the first part of our first interview; though I must assure you I consider the *specimens* I have had of you a very favourable *omen* of what is yet in store for us, should your stay in London be protracted.

It affords me unspeakable pleasure, my dear friend, and I hope in some degree I am influenced by the same desire which you feel, of living *to good purpose;* and using talents and influence to the glory of that God and that cause we have both warmly and decidedly espoused. The good is incalculable, which one individual, truly devoted to God, may effect. Let us both pray for an increase of that Divine love, which shall make us *run*, and delight ourselves in the commandments of God. I can testify, from happy experience, how much the influence of this blessed principle makes the path of duty easy; and those requisitions of self-denial, &c, so severe and contrary to nature, are easy and delightful through grace. I have sometimes been enabled to appropriate to myself a line of Madame Guion's, "In self-denial is her joy." It is not *always* thus with

me; but to the glory of Divine grace, I must acknowledge I have found, and do find it in a happy measure. I once heard Mr. B. say, "Never rest satisfied with your religion till it makes you happy;"—and nothing short of it does satisfy me; nothing troubles me so much, as the hiding of God's countenance:—his smile is heaven—his approbation, bliss; or in the words of an elegant writer, "Whom to know, is wisdom—whom to fear, is rectitude—whom to love, is happiness." What a mercy it is, dear Miss M., that from such pure sources, so early in life, we are called to draw out our felicity; and in surrendering our hearts to God, find that ample recompense, always connected with the sacrifice. My chief deficiency is a want of *poverty of spirit*, and my constitutional hinderance is *levity of spirit*; not that I decry cheerfulness; it is the element, and properly the privilege, of the Christian only. It is a something not so tranquil that I speak of; a something which would not be allowed, were a proper sense of the omniscience of God duly estimated and received. I wish to show you something of the *face* of my soul, that we may mutually suggest hints for improvement, and recommend remedies we have proved effectual.

London, March 7, 1812.

My Dear Friend,—I have been a little surprised in referring to the date of your last kind favour, to find so much time elapsed since the receipt of it. The truth is, that my engagements are so much more numerous and pressing now than formerly, that I must hope for the

candour and allowances of my correspondents, if I fail in being as punctual as in the days of my celibacy. My domestic avocations were then comparatively nothing, and I am disposed to congratulate myself that my *taste* in those days led me to the improvement of my mental powers; for the *food* I then derived, I must now live upon by *rumination*. And yet, my dear Miss M., so powerful are the charms of a *happy* union, that notwithstanding all I have conceded, I would not exchange the *present* for the *past*. Few indeed are so blessed in this state; as I possess a partner, in whose upright conduct and conversation I constantly behold an object worthy of my closest imitation. One equally suitable, my dear friend, I trust Providence has in store for *you*. In a connection so important I trust you will not hastily conclude; and believe me, there must be a great deal to compensate for the new cares and pains commonly resulting from marriage; and there must be in the partner of your choice, a *living*, a *decided piety*, to counteract the tendency this new relation has to wed the heart more closely to the world. This is indeed my point of danger; and I find daily need of peculiar grace, to have my chief treasure in heaven. You know, my dear friend, the interest I feel in your welfare. It is more than probable much time will not elapse ere a decision of this kind will take place; and much as you are disposed to glory in your present *unembarrassed* situation, the chain of love may be thrown around your neck also, and lead you captive. Hitherto you

have been the prey of much and accumulated anxiety; and you have had *alone* to struggle with it. Now a suitable marriage may make you happier, and more at ease than you have ever been, and give you the dearest friend you have ever had. But let it be *your own choice; and let your judgment guide your affections.* You alone can be judge; and above all, seek direction at His hands who has promised to direct the paths of those that love and fear him; and who hath said, "No good shall be withholden from them that walk uprightly."

Forgive me, my dear friend, if I have been intrusive or tedious on this subject. Regard all I have said as flowing from a *real love to you*, and *regard for your welfare.* It is a momentous business; and as I have tried the two states, I am convinced that nothing short of *an entire union of mind and pursuits, with the purest affection*, can counterbalance the new pains and anxieties commonly resulting from the married state. With regard to my health, I still continue very poorly. This is a new and unlooked-for trial to me. I view it all in wisdom and love: but for it I should have no memento that this is a state of *discipline*, so free am I from every other trial. It sometimes leads me to look forward to that happy state, where the spirit will be no longer encumbered by its clay tenement, but "where it will soar without bound, without consuming glow." God is teaching me another lesson, the inadequacy of every earthly good to satisfy my soul, without the continual enjoyment of his love and

presence. I hope you, my dear friend, are going forward steadily in the ways of God, and that you again enjoy the simplicity and earnestness of a country society. When you write, I hope to hear you have become a visiter of the benevolent society you mention. Many important lessons may be learnt in the chambers of poverty and affliction: we are called to it by the example of our Divine Master, who left us the poor as his special legacy; and who has stamped even poverty with dignity, by making it his own garb in the days of his incarnation.

Preparations for the important event of next June occupy a good deal of my time and attention; as yet I do not think anxiously about it: I hope indeed that its approximation will more and more stir me up to intimate communion with God, and to familiarity with that solemn event, which is the gate we must all pass through to heaven. My dear friend, if I have an interest in your affections, let me also have in your prayers, that I may be fully prepared for life or death.

To Miss W.

——— June 5, 1812.

My Dear Friend,—I cannot express to you the concern and surprise your long silence has occasioned me; particularly since I had an intimation from your brother that you had left home in consequence of illness. I have been led to apprehend the worst that could befall you, as I thought the subject of my last letter (if you ever received it) would have led you at any rate,

if you had but an interval of health or ease, to write me a few lines before my confinement, of which I am now in daily expectation. I am now, and have been for some time past, very unwell, and incapable of exertion, so that I cease to wish the trying hour to be protracted. Respecting you, I cannot feel easy until I hear of the state of your health and the cause of its decline. I feel inexpressibly for you, dear Mary Ann, on that subject, which I fear is still involved in the same painful obscurity as to its issue, which has so long marked it. Pray relieve my mind by letting me know all respecting you; and let me not have, in addition to the thoughtfulness connected with my present situation, to labour under imaginary forebodings relative to a friend who will ever be most dear to me.

Since my marriage, God has given me every thing I could desire excepting health: in wisdom, no doubt, he has deprived me of this; though I have reason to fear this dispensation has not been so sanctified to my soul's good as he designed it. A time of more severe trial awaits me; and my only confidence is in that God who is all-sufficient to deliver me. I can repose in him, and feel peculiar consolation in reflecting on that chain of providence which led to our union. I feel I am still in the hands of the same Parent who superintends all our concerns. Allow me to beg of you, my dear friend, to remember me in your prayers. I and my beloved C. frequently remember you when bowed together at a throne of grace.——

The above letter, intended for Miss W., was left unfinished.

The last letter she wrote was to her brother at Cambridge, from which the following is extracted. It is dated only ten days before her confinement:—

To Mr. William Hanson, Cambridge.

June 5, 1812.

I cannot but think it will surprise you a little, my dear brother, to receive a letter from one, who, but for the multifarious engagements of a married life, would have been one of the first to have classed herself among your correspondents. * * * * * * As the most responsible, the most dignified of offices awaits you, I trust *that* influence, which alone can render it a delightful and easy employ, will be more and more experienced by you—that moved, "*in verity, by the Holy Ghost,*" you may be made eventually the instrument of turning many of your fellow mortals to the path of life and happiness which our holy religion so fully sets forth. I am aware, from the nature of your present studies, of the difficulties you have to combat with, in cultivating that personal piety, which is so delightful and so necessary for the future discharge of duties of a pastoral nature. God will, I trust, abundantly sanctify to your good those energies of mind with which he has endued you, and that they will be directed toward the glorious object of a minister of the Gospel.

* * * * *

I am almost a complete prisoner, very much indisposed in body, and in the daily expectation of an event, for which my mind can only derive support and confidence in making God my refuge.

The efficacy of religion is but little known in hours of ease and days of prosperity; its benign and cheering influence is felt on the bed of pain and languishing, when all human help is impotent, and when death may receive his commission to unveil the eternal world.

Life has to me now many more fascinations than it ever had before. God has bestowed upon me the best of earthly blessings, and I have known nothing like a trial since my marriage, but bodily indisposition; a merciful infusion in that cup of bliss, which otherwise might have intoxicated me.

I need not tell you, my dearest William, the pleasure a letter from you will afford me.

May the blessing of God attend you, my ever dear brother; may your present studies conduce to your best interests, and in days to come, to the good of many! May you be kept from every snare, and be guided into all truth, and know more and more of the indwelling of that peace which passeth understanding! My dear husband unites with me in kind love to you.—Believe me ever to remain your most affectionate sister,

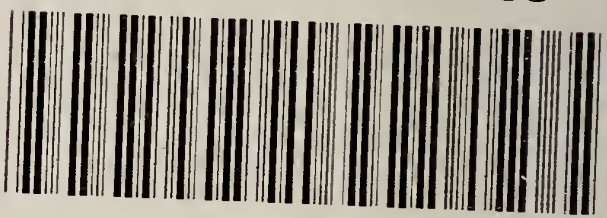
MARY COOPER.

THE END.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: May 2005

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township PA 16066

THE HOSKINS MFG. CO., INC.
BOUND TO PLEASE
OCT 69
N. MANCHESTER, INDIANA

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

0 014 167 032 3